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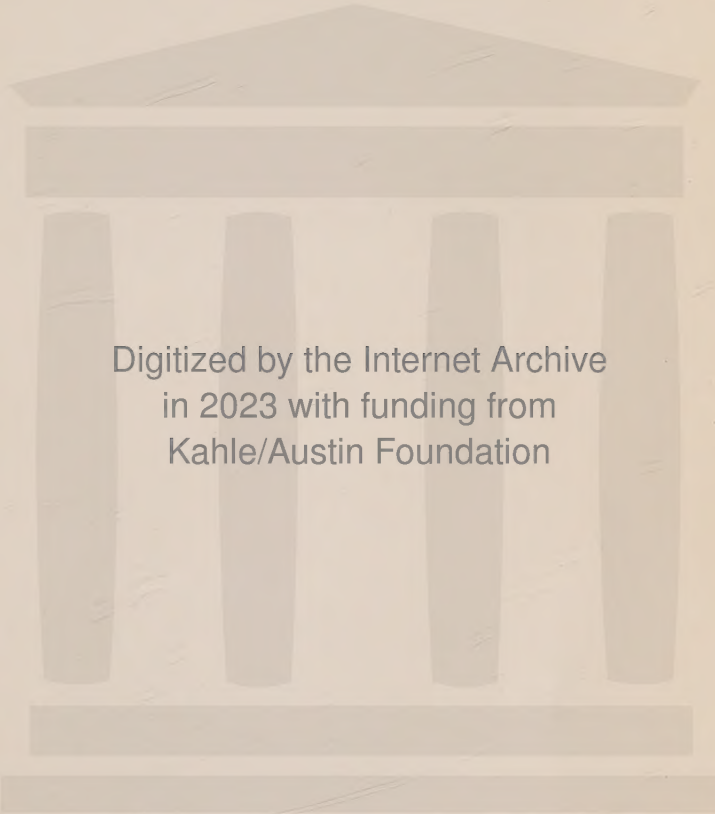
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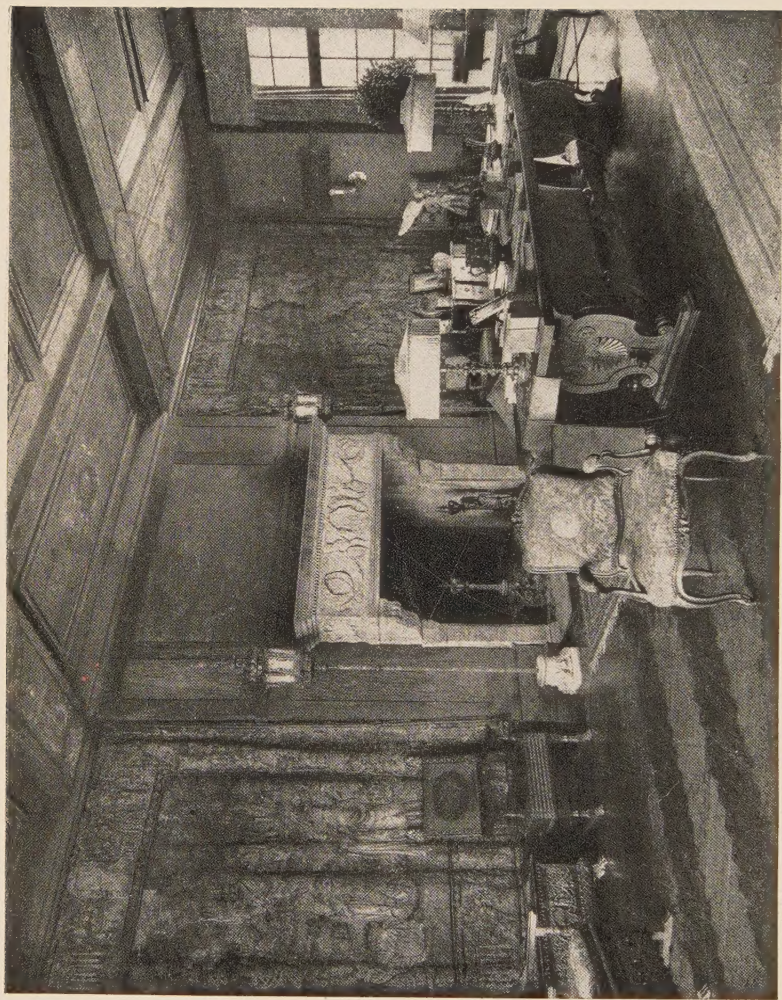












A MODERN LIVING-ROOM IN A COUNTRY HOUSE. IN CHOICE, TREATMENT AND ARRANGEMENT THIS ROOM (USING MATERIAL FROM VARIOUS PERIOD STYLES) EXPRESSES SUCCESSFULLY THE MODERN AMERICAN IDEA. PERIODS ARE SUCCESSFULLY COMBINED TO EXPRESS A SEQUENCE OF QUALITIES RESULTING IN A DISTINCT PERSONALITY, INDIVIDUAL CHARM AND AN ILLUSTRATION OF GOOD TASTE IN THE APPLICATION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERIOR DECORATION.



# INTERIOR DECORATION

## ITS PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

BY  
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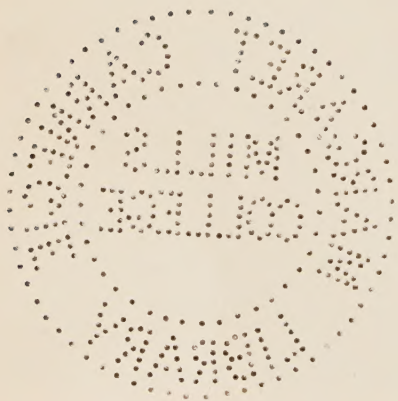
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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY FRIEND  
WILLIAM M. ODOM WHOSE LOYAL AND  
SYMPATHETIC COÖPERATION HAS DONE  
MUCH TO CRYSTALLIZE ITS CONTENTS

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## FOREWORD

MUCH confusion exists at the present time as to the artistic essentials of a modern house. A great deal has been written—perhaps more has been said—about this subject, and still it is vague to most of us. This vagueness is partly because we have not realized fully that a house is but the normal expression of one's intellectual concept of fitness and his æsthetic ideal of what is beautiful.

The house is but the externalized man; himself expressed in colour, form, line and texture. To be sure, he is usually limited in means, hampered by a contrary and penurious landlord or by family heirlooms, and often he cannot find just what he wants in the trade; but still the house is his house. It is *he*.

Another reason for this vagueness is the extreme difficulty of parting with traditions. We all deplore this reluctance in others and then embrace our individual traditions the more closely. The first we must dispel are those concerning art; then we must try to find out what art really is. Another quite as necessary to overcome is the generally accepted idea that one must learn all he knows of colour, form and texture through "feeling." This doctrine has for generations kept the consciousness of thousands of people closed to the simplest principles of the language structure of colour and form. Being free of these misleading traditional beliefs, the

## FOREWORD

way is open for learning to do what is not only essential, but natural.

The periods, too, have been treated as strange and incomprehensible, too deep and mysterious for anything but unquestioning admiration and slavish copy. The decorative idea is so completely hidden by the belief in and admiration for ornamental show, that the Baroque idea is the only one generally considered as decorative at all.

These and other misconceptions are the reasons for this book. It is modestly hoped that it may be of service to somebody in pointing out what a house is really for and what it should express. It is designed also to make clear the essential qualities which are the life and soul of each of the decorative periods in history.

More than anything else, perhaps, it attempts to express simply the principles of colour and form harmony in such a way that any one, who desires to, may express with some degree of confidence his individual ideas. These ideas in terms of colour, form, line and texture form his ideal of interior decoration.

Each of the illustrations submitted is an expression of some particular quality or qualities explained in the captions. The violation of other principles of arrangement in some cases detracts from the perfect unity of the room. Each illustration should be seen from this point of view also.



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INTERIOR DECORATION  
PART I





## PART I

## INTRODUCTION

### WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW TO DECORATE

THE very term "interior decoration" is misleading, and is the cause of much of the bad interpretation of the decorative idea for which it stands. Love of beauty and the desire to create it is a primal instinct in man. The personal pride and pleasure one takes in his own house is too generally acknowledged to need comment. If, however, one desires to possess a so-called artistic house, the making of such a house involves an understanding of certain principles.

In the first place there are two quite distinct classes with whom one must deal: first that of the art connoisseur, or artist collector of antique objects. While every man of this type is individual, there are principles of choice and arrangement by which he must be governed, be his taste ever so fine. His room is a personal expression of his taste in the combining of things with different meanings, but it is quite impossible for the rank and file of those who live in ordinary homes to appreciate such an expression.

Because of this first class the general public has not grasped the difference between a museum or department-store collection of objects, such as furniture, hangings, carpets, etc., and a room in which to live. Only an artist can be trusted to attempt such house

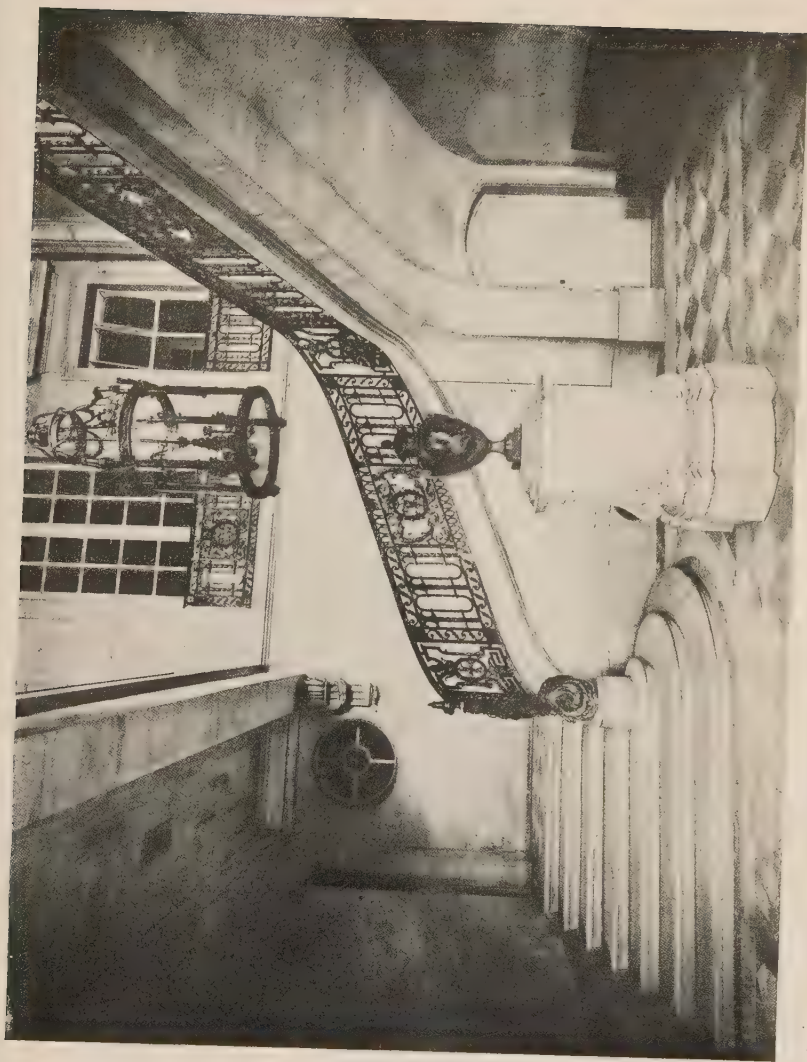
## INTERIOR DECORATION

furnishing. By an artist I do not mean a man who paints pictures merely. I mean a man who possesses the art quality in such a degree that he may be able, not only to group art objects in any field, but also that he may have a sensitive appreciation of them in whatever combination they may appear.

The second class includes ninety-five per cent. of all people who use a house, and it is to them in particular that this book is given.

We find among these a lack of the remotest conception of what decoration really is, for there are many ways in which this term may be, and is, misapplied. One person believes that ornament, pattern, or art objects placed anywhere, in any relation one to the other, must be decorative. Nothing is further from the truth. Be a thing ever so good, it may easily lose its charm through association with the wrong things. Another person believes that the more he buys and crowds his room with either new or expensive objects, the more decorative or decorated it becomes. This, too, is a fallacy. Not only is it not decorative to use too much or too many decorative things, but it prevents any one of the objects from having a decorative effect. Neither these things nor their cost, neither show, vogue, period, nor sentimental foolishness, are in the least concerned with an expression of the decorative idea.

Decoration implies, first of all, something to decorate. By this we mean some definite form or arrangement to which decoration is to be applied, and a reason for applying it. It is not because I have a room that I rush to pile something onto or into it. It is because I need some things in certain places in this room. This



A. SHOWING THE PROPER USE OF DECORATIVE ORNAMENT IN STRENGTHENING AND BEAUTIFYING THE ARCHITECTURAL EFFECTS OF STAIRWAY AND WINDOWS.







B. THE WRONG USE OF ORNAMENT APPLYING WITHOUT PURPOSE OR REASON. THE ONLY EXCUSE BEING SHOW.



## WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW TO DECORATE

necessitates additions of a certain kind to make the room fulfill its function, and to make it a beautiful unit when it is finished. The room is, first of all, to fulfill its function. This matter of function is fundamental in any applied art. The room, and most objects in the room, exist for use first. The quality of beauty is desirable and essential in fulfilling the highest ideal; but however beautiful the objects are, if the functional idea is not adequately and fully carried out, the art from the standpoint of house furnishing is but one-half expressed.

Take, for example, a dining-room. The first question to be asked is: what is the dining-room for—that is, for what idea does a dining-room stand? The only sensible answer is: this room exists to eat in, and to eat in in peace. Any object found therein which detracts for any reason from this idea is not only a non-essential, but a preventive of the realization of its ideal. When I enter a dining-room I expect to see a table of such size, proportion, scale, and arrangement as will not only attract my æsthetic sense, but will also bid me sit and eat in comfort. The same quality should be felt in whatever is on the table; also in the chairs, the side-board, and other accessories essential to this room. If, however, on entering the room I find as the most prominent thing the embalmed head of an antique deer or a collection of stuffed birds, or other objects properly belonging to the Museum of Natural History, there is nothing present in these to bid me eat or permit me to do so in peace. A still more common and glaring failure to realize this functional idea is seen in the inordinate display of silverware, cut glass, painted dishes, and other indiscriminate acquisitions of family life displayed upon



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sideboard, serving table, and plate rack, or even hung upon the walls as decorative objects. Not only is it in bad taste to display one's private collections to public gaze, but it suggests in this case that articles designed for use, and requiring cleanliness as their essential quality, will need some personal attention before they can be placed upon the table, or used elsewhere. They are neither decorative nor related to the scheme of furnishing a dining-room.

If the problem is a bedroom, I ask myself what is the bedroom for, and the answer comes: the bedroom is a place in which to rest and sleep. If this is what the room is for, anything in its furnishing and decoration that interferes materially with these two functions should be avoided. The bed, dressing-table, chair, toilet articles, etc., in this sequence, seem to be the essentials for such a room. Spotted wall papers, floral carpets, scattered photographs, and the like, create a series of stripes and spots that are not only ugly in their arrangement, but unrestful, undignified, and perplexing in their effect.

In the same way, the living-room is meant to live in. We associate with this room objects which one needs to have about him for comfort, use, companionship, and personal enjoyment.

The drawing-room offers rather a problem of general use. It is the room in which not only friends but acquaintances and other guests make brief stays for purposes of formal social intercourse. Such things as stimulate conversation, arouse wit, and express one's general good taste belong in this room.

It will be clearly seen that the problems of the dining-



DOORWAY ILLUSTRATING OVER-EMPHASIS OF THE TOP BY TOO MUCH ORNAMENT, INCONSISTENTLY APPLIED.



DOORWAY WHICH ILLUSTRATES STRUCTURAL EMPHASIS BY ORNAMENT, CONSISTENTLY APPLIED.



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room, hotel corridor, the general reception room, etc., are individual ones. The dominating idea of function separates one from the other, and renders each case a problem for special consideration before taking up the question of decorative arrangement.

In eliminating from rooms already furnished a sufficient number of articles to make a beginning possible, it is necessary to discuss one universal quality. Every one normally made has what he calls a sentiment for certain things. This sentiment is primarily, of course, supposed to apply to persons or their characteristics, but unfortunately it has been allowed to extend to all sorts of material objects, wedding gifts, family heirlooms, Christmas presents, bargain-sale effects, and other things with which nearly every home is filled.

The first error to combat in this field is the one through which the object bequeathed by a relative is confused with the relative himself. Because one's uncle possessed a crayon portrait of himself, or a mahogany table ugly in line, bad in proportion, and disagreeable in colour, is no reason why these inartistic objects should be perpetuated in each generation until the family line is extinct. This same uncle—be he ever so perfect in moral, spiritual, and even æsthetic qualities—could not and would not wish to transfer the qualities of these objects to the consciousness of his descendants simply because, for some unknown reason, he used them while he was alive. The mahogany table and its qualities are quite apart from the qualities of the individual, and a person who connects these two or makes them one is not a man of sentiment, but one of sentimentality—which is quite another matter. The same thing is true where gifts and



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other ugly acquired objects are indiscriminately cherished. The only possible excuse for keeping such things about is the lack of money to buy new ones and, even in that case, better nothing at all than bad things where good ones ought to be.

Probably the most difficult thing for any person who truly desires an artistic home, is to acquire the courage to put forever out of sight those things which absolutely prevent the realization of his ideal.

The attributes of beauty are perhaps difficult to understand at first, but in subsequent chapters we shall see that the merest novice can be helped to produce this quality if he can grasp the element of function and eliminate sentimentality from his consciousness at the outset.

To return now to the question of decoration itself, some very elementary yet vital statements may be made here. Since every applied art object involves two elements—use and beauty—it is essential that we see these in their relation to each other and in their relation to the decorative idea.

As has been stated before, with a useful thing, use is paramount. One of the old masters of the Renaissance said: "Decoration must never be applied where use is sacrificed in its application." To appreciate this is probably the first step in grasping the meaning of the decorative idea. How often do we see fruits and flowers painted in the centre of a plate upon which we must eat anything ranging from soup to dessert. If these do not appear, fish do, and this complicates the situation considerably. The sofa pillow—that much-abused decorative article—is not decorative to most



A CONSOLE TABLE, GOOD IN PROPORTION, BUT WITH ORNAMENT EXPLOITED FOR ITSELF IN A "CHRISTMAS TREE" ARRANGEMENT DISREGARDING STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS.

A COMMUNE, BEAUTIFUL IN PROPORTION, WITH ORNAMENT APPLIED IN A TRULY DECORATIVE MANNER, EMPHASIZING STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONAL APPOINTMENTS, HANDLES AND KEYHOLES.



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people if it is a solid colour or the colour of their divan. They must display prominently in its centre objects human, animal, vegetable, and sometimes mineral. The carpet and rug, with roses and lilies natural enough to demand respect, are trodden on without the slightest feeling as to the fitness of things in materials. Flowers appear upon our walls, and into them we drive nails, on them we hang pictures, and as they glaringly intrude themselves we are forever prevented from using hangings or other fittings decoratively upon them.

This question of applying decoration, it will be seen, is not only concerned with the objects mentioned, but with furniture and other art objects when they are intended for use, and the decorative idea interferes in the least with that use. The same authority has given us help by a statement like this: "Decoration exists to emphasize and make structure stronger, and also to add beauty to the object decorated." The first consideration here, it will be seen, is not the decoration, but the structure of the object to be decorated. Take for example the door and its trim. The casing is bordered on each of its edges by mouldings more or less distinct. They are greater or fewer in number, according to the scale of the door, but always extend in the same direction as the structure of the door; that is, each parallel to the other, with their angles always right angles. These mouldings, following exactly the structure of the opening, as well as the door itself, not only call attention by their lines to the opening, but serve to strengthen or make more emphatic the outline of this opening. At the same time they perform the second function of breaking up the surface of the woodwork



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casing. This breaking up relieves the monotony of the flat surface, making the casing more interesting and, consequently, more beautiful in most instances than a perfectly flat surface could be made to appear.

The chimney piece with its mantel shelf frequently has classic mouldings or simple lines bordering and bounding it. In this case the moulding becomes a decorative idea because it has followed and strengthened the structural appearance, and has, through a modest display of variation in surface and arrangement, expressed beauty or the decorative idea. One may readily see how this can be applied to a rug. A plain border, two or three bands, a few simple lines following the edge of the rug conforms to this law and also to the first principle stated, since there is no reason why one should not step upon an abstract decorative line.

At this point further illustration is unnecessary, but one should test not only these articles each in itself, but their arrangement as decorative effects in the room.

A helpful suggestion may be given here. An English writer has said that the confusion between decoration and ornamentation has led to many abuses of historic ornament. This is just as true of any other ornament seen in its true relation to the subject under treatment. "Decoration," he says, "exists to strengthen structure and make more beautiful the object on which it appears. Ornamentation, on the other hand, exists to exploit itself at the expense of the thing upon which it is applied." This is food for thought. If the ornament becomes the end instead of the means, or in other words, if it becomes apparent as an addition, with the purpose of showing itself, it loses the decorative quality and savours

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of ostentation and, of course, proportionately, of vulgarity. It is well to remember this—that in any decorative question, decoration does not exist for itself, but for the thing upon which, or with which, it is used.

Another point must be discussed in order that we may begin at once to see material in its relation to decoration. Pattern or ornament must be adapted to the material in which it is rendered. For example, perfectly natural flowers cannot be expressed in woollen carpets nor in printed wall papers at so much a roll. Neither can vegetables, birds, and flowers be painted on china, glazed and baked, and still be real. Nor is this desirable. It is misapplied effort to attempt to copy nature exactly, and to reproduce all its qualities in anything excepting its own material.

Modern art thought has been almost exclusively influenced by the decadent Renaissance of France. Naturalism is not art, it is imitation, and when these two are confused, successful decoration is well-nigh impossible. In order that decorative motives may perform their function, they must be so conventionalized that they seem to be adequately and rightly expressed in the material with which or in which they are used. Only the greatest artists of any time are fit to handle naturalism in a decorative way, and then the conventionalization or modification of them to suit the material is a criterion of their decorative excellence.

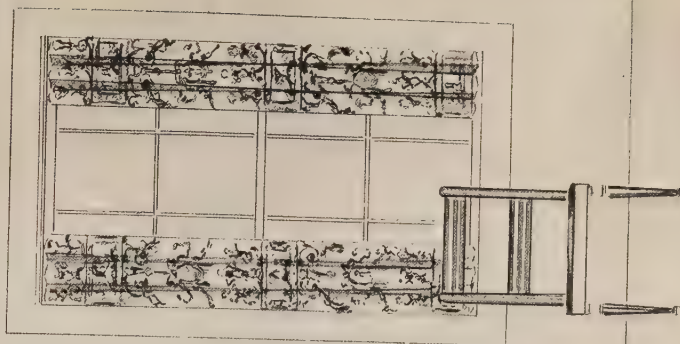
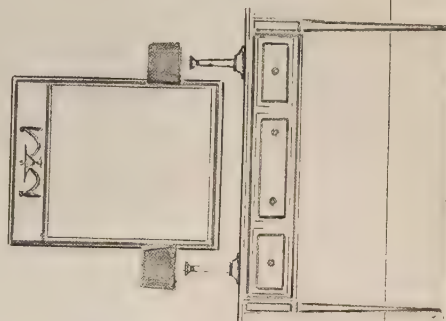
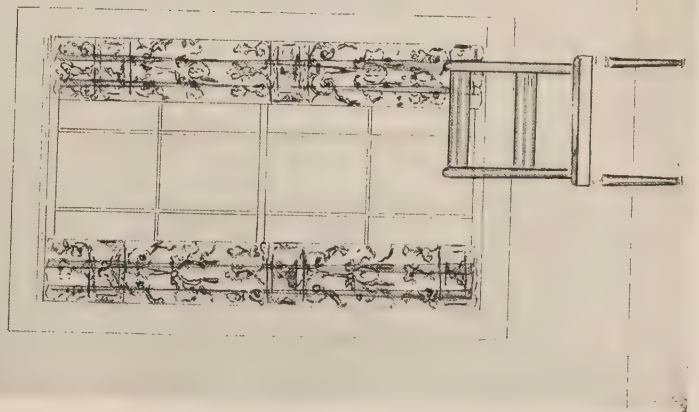
Pictures, ornaments, and other objects, each perhaps decorative, may be so arranged on a wall, a table, or a mantel, as to destroy, for example, the rest quality of a room. Its dignity, too, or formality, may be absolutely lost in the arrangement of the furniture or in the placing

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of objects of ornament about the room. When this is done the decorative object, still decorative in itself, not only fails to perform its decorative function, but it destroys the fundamental idea, the use for which it is intended. This is illustrated in the hanging of portières at doors so that passage is well-nigh impossible, or placing window hangings in such a way that no light can come in or that persons outside are always able to look in. It will later be seen that there is a way to hang windows and doors decoratively, and still not interfere with their function. This way is, of course, the right way, from the standpoint of function, as well as of art and common sense.

It will be seen then that the problem of decorating a room takes into account its function and the function of each object used in its furnishing. It also includes such a choice and arrangement of these objects as will result in a decorative unit adequately expressed. It is really a question of seeing structure clearly in relation to its need for decorative treatment, and then seeing backgrounds in their relation to the decorative objects used. In our discussion of colour this matter of backgrounds will be considered.

There is one term the real meaning of which, in its relation to interior decoration, has become obsolete through long misuse. To attempt to go into the principles of colour, form, and composition without understanding this term would be futile. I refer to the term "art." This word more than any other has been played with, misapplied, and used for purposes of sentimental exploitation until it seems to have lost its significance. Perhaps even in a practical discussion of interior decora-



ELEVATION SKETCH OF SIMPLE ROOM IN WHICH THE DECORATIVE IDEA IS CORRECTLY EXPRESSED IN CHINTZ HANGINGS, PLACING AND SPACING OF FURNITURE ON WALL, AND IN FURNITURE TREATMENT. DECORATIVE MATERIALS FOLLOWS STRUCTURE AND ADDS BEAUTY.





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tion it may not be amiss to consider this term in its relation to life.

I have said that man intuitively desires to create and to possess beauty. This desire is equivalent in man's higher self to the appetite for food or drink or rest in the realm of physical existence. It is just as general, just as clearly defined, and just as important to man's realization of himself. This is shown by an investigation of the savage, the barbarian, or the so-called civilized communities in their building of shelter and in its decorative treatment, their making of implements and utensils more or less ornamented, their use and misuse of paint, metals, and textiles in matters of attire and in all ways by which man expresses naturally his life activities.

Art is then, first of all, a state of mind, a condition of consciousness growing out of a desire for beauty; or one might define it as an appetite for æsthetic things. The atrocities committed in any of the fields I mentioned are but sincere attempts to create the natural stimulus which the æsthetic sense of man demands. The reasons for these inartistic things are ignorance and over-zealous desire for beauty—not a wish to badly express the idea. Since art is a state of mind or of consciousness, it may be described as harmony between the idea and its expression and between all parts of the elements through which idea is expressed.

The first division of this art quality is that of fitness or function, which we have discussed. This requires an element of intellectual ability on the part of the art producer. The æsthetic, or second part, refers to the knowledge and feeling regarding the relationship of forms, lines and colours that will by their combination

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excite an æsthetic emotion when presented to the sense of sight.

The response to the æsthetic or art quality is simply a question of becoming keen to what relations of colour, form, and line have in the best art expression succeeded in exciting the strongest æsthetic emotion. This response reveals what basic principles underlie the formation of these combinations, and, finally, determines the application of these principles to simple problems of choice and arrangement of the necessary things for any room under discussion.

Nothing is more helpful in sensing the art quality and securing a natural expression of it than to eliminate from one's mind some of the things that art is not.

First, it is not prettiness. Art is beauty, and beauty is "from within out," not "from without in." Its quality is eternal. Beauty of mind, if it exist, may express itself unconsciously in whatever one does. Some people with very homely and ordinary features are, when thinking and acting rightly, truly beautiful. Prettiness, on the other hand, is from without. It is ephemeral, and pleases the eye only. It takes no intellect and no æsthetic sense to appreciate prettiness.

Second, the inordinate and blind worship of the antique is not art. If a man at seventy has retained any charm, it is in spite of his age, not because of it. Time softens and accentuates good things because their qualities are permanent. It sometimes aggravates and makes unbearable ugly things for the same reason. If this difference can be seen in persons, it certainly can be perceived in things. Let the worship of pasted labels, telling how old an article is, cease to exist, and one ob-



HISTORIC ROOM, ILLUSTRATING THE PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESSFUL WALL DECORATION AND CONSISTENT, STRUCTURAL UNITY IN THE ARRANGEMENT OF FURNITURE GROUPED FOR COMFORT, DIGNITY AND ELEGANCE.





stacle to understanding art will be removed. Another and more deadly mistake is the idolizing of a particular man's work. "Is it a real Rembrandt?" "Is this truly of the fifteenth century?" "Was it done by Bramante?" "Are you certain this is an authentic Queen Anne piece?" No one has ever done well all the time. Much of the work of the very greatest artists has been unworthy of them. Some work of much lesser lights has been of an excellent character. Let us see the quality of art in the object, and not the man's name or the conditions under which he made it, and there is a chance that we shall know art when it appears in the work of others or in our own.

It is more difficult still to disassociate art from the idea of picture painting. In the past drawing and painting have been art education. If a man studied art, expressed art, or loved art it must be through pictures only, and they were expected to belong to the school of realism and naturalism, in which not a thing was left to the imagination of the observer except, perhaps, how long it took to paint them and how much it cost to buy them. To disassociate the art quality from pictures, drawings, statuary, or any one particular medium of expression, is essential to the realization of its quality in any field.

Any discussion, however simple, of these terms seems to establish the following facts: that art is an essential quality in human life and that it is the expression of a knowledge and feeling for functional fitness and for beauty in every made thing. It should further appear that decoration is the natural expression of this art quality in objects of use and beauty, with a realization of their

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relation to each other, and the possibilities and limitations attendant upon the problem of furnishing a house. It should seem clear also that the structural line or build of the object is the guiding idea in the application of whatever is to be used decoratively upon the room as a background. The decorative material must not only be in harmony with the idea for which each piece stands, but it must be used harmoniously in making up the room and so expressing a complete decorative thought.

## PART I

## CHAPTER I

### COLOUR AND ITS RELATION TO THE DECORATIVE IDEA

MAN expresses his ideas or conveys his thoughts to others by means of language, and language consists of a set of symbols which serve to establish a standard system of communication between all persons by whom these symbols are understood. To all who understand English the word "boy" conveys practically the same general meaning. In any tongue the word symbol is meant to establish a criterion of understanding as to some object or idea for which the word symbol stands.

The same truth may be applied to musical tones. A succession of sounds or a chord of tones conveys to him who understands this language a concord of musical elements expanded into a motif. A quality or an emotion quite similar in its nature is aroused in all persons who hear and understand. Musical composition exists to convey from one person to others a stimulant, whose action on the æsthetic sense and on the consciousness of human beings shall result in awakening definite emotions, thus constructing definite ideas.

The picture language, and its efficient method of communicating ideas even between people who do not understand the same word language or the same sound

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language, is too well known and understood to require comment. Age, success, national limitations, and educational development are alike unable to destroy the power of the pictured idea.

Colour, which is perhaps one of the most potent and certainly one of the most pleasing means of expressing ideas, is least understood. It is of all language forms the most abused. This is partly due to the fact that in this age colour is usually accepted as good because it belonged to some period expression, or because some particular person used it, or, what is more lamentable, because some individual likes it for personal reasons. The sentimental aspect of colour, sensed and used for the orgy for emotions it creates, has done much to retard the scientific and sensible understanding and use of it. If it is worth knowing at all, it is worth understanding as well as feeling, and it is also worth using to express with the utmost perfection all that its component elements can possibly tell.

Like all other language expressions there are two ways of approaching it from the constructive standpoint: first, one may be surrounded by a harmonious colour environment. He may be led to see what is really good and bad under this condition and he may by unconscious absorption—particularly if he has a natural instinct for colour discernment—learn to sense right relationships and use them in his own life expression. This manner, however, of acquiring knowledge is one sided, and is applicable mostly to persons who are unusually endowed, leaving one with no standard of judgment except feeling. Since feelings are emotions and differ absolutely in individuals, they must also vary in every

instance, and therefore the results of this training with most persons are somewhat unreliable.

On the other hand, colour, when considered as a power in nature, and regarded as a normal method of expressing ideas, may be as scientific in its inception and workings as any other power in nature, so becoming a tangible thing to acquire and use.

Science has not developed colour as it has sound, but there are many analogies apparent to the uninitiated. Sound is produced by the vibration of the ether surrounding us. Colour is produced by the vibration of light in the same ether. Sound, its combinations and messages, reach consciousness through the sense of hearing. Colour, its elemental meanings, combinations, and force, reach the same consciousness in the same way through the sense of sight. The impressions of sound and colour are interwoven in consciousness through association with other ideas and with each other, until music seems to have colour, and colour seems to express musical tone. In fact, so closely are these media associated in the minds of many persons that it is not difficult for them to translate a symphony in music to a colour harmony exciting the same emotions, or the colour harmony to the musical symphony with the same results. It is not the purpose of this discussion to go into the details of these relationships, but only to bring to the mind of the reader the necessity for seeing colour at the outset from the same standpoint of common sense and adaptability for use that he sees sound symbols or picture representations. The interest which one has in a language and the progress he makes in acquiring it depend upon perceiving clearly the simplest elements in that language, their re-



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lation to each other and to ideas which they should express. The treatment of colour must be under the same conditions.

It has been said that colour originates in light. This may be proven by observing colours in the brilliant sunlight, in a shaded room, on a very dark day, just before dark, and in a perfectly darkened room if this were possible. The change in their appearance in each case is due to the change in light in which these observations are made. The colour of the object remains the same, but the condition under which the eye receives the impression changes. The dull day brings dull colours apparently, and similarly the bright day brilliant ones. This is because the light is bright or dull, and not because the pigment substance has in any way been changed.

This fact is important in the selection and arrangement of materials for furnishing a room, inasmuch as the room must be seen ordinarily in all kinds of weather, day and night, with both natural and artificial lights. Unless one knows what the normal colour is under normal circumstances, he is unable to use the artificial light which comes from electricity, gas, or oil, or to use hangings other than white, or to place upon his walls any colour from which light must be reflected onto all other objects associated with it. Is it not clear that the light entering a room may be changed in tone by the colour of the window hanging, through which it is filtered, by reflecting from the wall some of the colour which its surface shows, or from the changed aspect which it must take on if the light itself is produced by artificial means?

All of us have seen blue turn to green when seen under artificial light. We have seen violet almost become red,

# A DESCRIPTIVE COLOUR CHART



THE OUTER CIRCLE SHOWS THE NORMAL, FULL INTENSE PRIMARIES, BINARIES, AND HUES.

THE INNER CIRCLE SHOWS HALF-NEUTRALIZED PRIMARIES AND BINARIES AS THEY APPROACH THE BACKGROUND POSSIBILITY.

OPPOSITE TONES IN THE CIRCUIT ARE CALLED COMPLEMENTS.



and another tone of violet appear gray. These are perfectly natural changes, and are due only to the effect which one element in colour produces on another when used in connection with it. Bad colour schemes could easily be avoided if we knew the power of each of the elements concerned.

It is wise at this point to differentiate between colour as the physicist uses the term in connection with colour in light, or as component elements of pure white light and the pigment colour so called, which includes dyestuffs, printers' inks, oil and water-colour paints, etc. These pigments are materials which absorb a part of each ray of light and leave the remaining part on the surface, giving the impression to the eye of the colour which one sees when he beholds any object.

In terms of general understanding there are three elemental pigments which express the three primary elements of colour found in white light. In pigment terms these three elements are called yellow, red, and blue, and are the primary colours in what is known as the colour spectrum. When these normal elements are in their fullest strength they are easily fused by mixing into a neutral gray in which no apparent colour is seen. This gray, eliminating all colour, is the proof that the three elemental pigments are the foundation of the colour language and that their fusion into gray is the translation of the rainbow spectrum into light.

Starting then with yellow, red, and blue of normal tone, all other colour tones, with the additional use of black and white, may be made. Because of this, yellow, red, and blue stand out as the simplest, most primitive, least involved, and most easily grasped of all colour tones.

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It is easy to understand why young children, primitive races, and persons with an obtuse colour sense can without conscious effort appreciate yellow, red, and blue in their full brilliancy and in limitless areas. A more refined sense or a greater range of colour possibility ignores this crudeness, except in cases of extraordinary emphasis for very particular reasons.

Green as a normal colour is one-half yellow and one-half blue in force; orange is one-half red and one-half yellow; purple is one-half red and one-half blue. These three colours, because there are two elements involved in each, are called binary colours, and these, since they contain two elements each, are less easily grasped, require a more cultivated sense, and express a wider range of quality idea.

With these six colours in mind let us examine the fundamental meaning of each. A colour tone should by its very nature mean a quality, and should arouse in the individual the feeling of quality, and not merely excite a feeling of pleasure or bring up by association the colour name.

Yellow is more than any of these like the sun or artificial light in its appearance. In fact, it is very like most artificial lights, and like the sun when one looks directly into it. Because of this, yellow is called light, and just as light brings cheer into the darkened room, just as it gives life to plant forms, just as its life-giving and cheer-giving qualities are seen in other manifestations, so yellow, entering into any colour scheme whatever, introduces into it the same quality feelings of light, cheer, buoyancy and life.

The darkened city room, with its one window opening



## THE DECORATIVE IDEA

on a court, may be made livable and usable by means of a yellow wall paper, with a lighter, softer, yellow ceiling. Then, by bringing light yellow into the hangings and using yellow lamp shades lined with white, all the light will be conserved. The natural and artificial lights will be supplemented by the colour, and the qualities which light itself has will be forced into the scheme of the room. To forget the power of light in room arrangement is to forget the fundamental fact in all colour use. This does not mean that in any of these cases a perfectly full, intense, brilliant yellow should appear, but a colour tone, in which yellow is the dominating element. Such names as buff, cream, ecru, lemon, etc., are given to yellow colour tones in which yellow is the dominating element.

Red suggests blood and fire—blood as it relates to the life-giving or vitalizing force in man which makes him think more quickly and act more quickly—which arouses his passions, and creates ideas of warmth and irritation. This is particularly true because persons have been born and have lived with blood red in colour and with fire red in its dominating element. We know by life experience the effects of such things on the actions of man.

This quality of aggressive action on the part of red is curious in its effect when used in excess. Some two years ago in a large department store a small room was built and coloured throughout a bright normal red. A jury of six men was invited to estimate the size of the interior. The same room was removed to another part of the store and coloured in light clear blue. The same party of men was asked to estimate the size of this room.

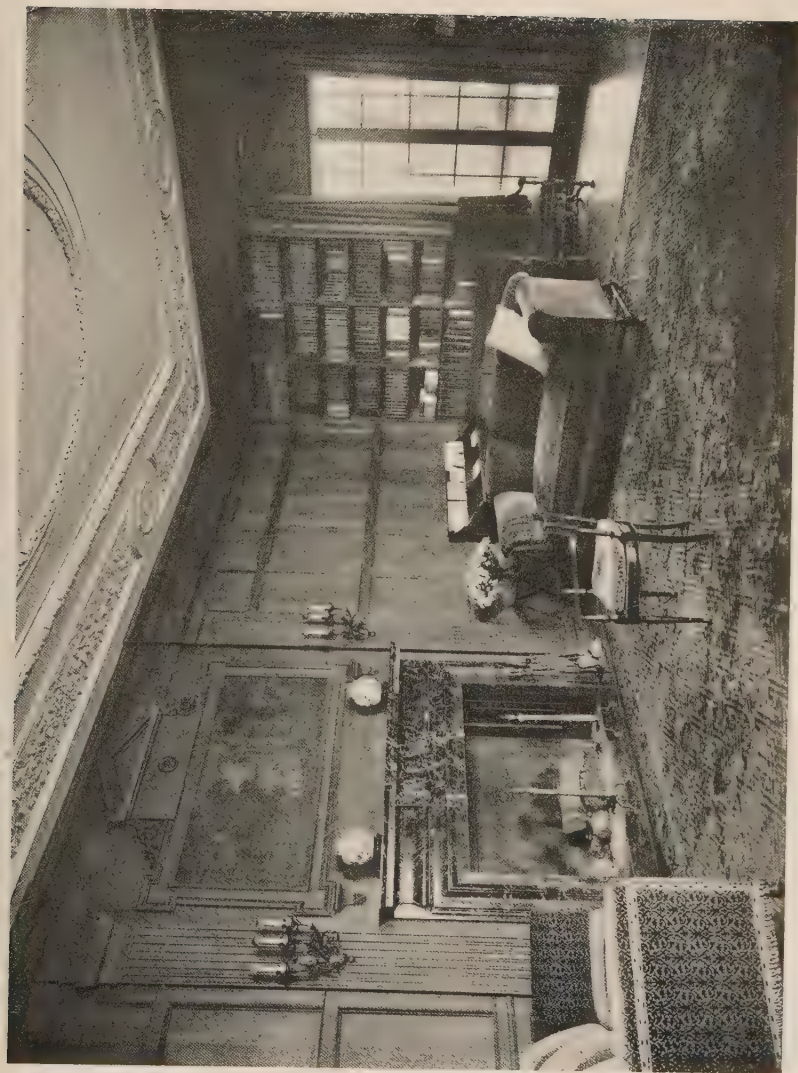
## INTERIOR DECORATION

They estimated the latter to be over thirty per cent. larger than the former, and refused to believe that the two rooms were identical.

Red, by its aggressive nature, seems to reach man's consciousness more quickly than blue and, therefore, the walls and ceilings seem to contract or to be brought closer together, thus lessening the apparent size of the room. The effect that red has upon animal life is well illustrated by its use in exciting the temper of the bull in the Spanish bull ring, the turkey gobbler on the New England farm, or the savage beast in the jungles of the African forest. This exciting quality which red possesses is a valuable asset for use in stage settings where the primary object is to create a state of emotion in the audience in harmony with the incident which the actors wish to force on public consciousness. Those who have seen Miss Nethersole, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, or Mrs. Fiske in any of their pronounced successes can readily see how the use and the absence of this colour have played a large part in the creation of an atmosphere calculated to convince the audience of the idea which the play portrayed.

The skillful use of red brings out—particularly in town houses—a quality of warmth and inviting hospitality not to be despised. On the other hand, a use of it in any considerable quantity in the country house suggests the temperature that is likely to prevail, instead of giving the impression of an antidote for the weather one is trying to escape.

Blue, the third element of colour, is known as the cold or non-aggressive element. It is this which holds red in check or destroys the too pronounced effect of



A MODERN LIBRARY WHOSE WALLS AND CEILING ARE CLASSICS OF THEIR TYPE. RESTRAINT  
IN THE SELECTION OF RUGS AND FURNISHINGS EMPHASIZE THIS DECORATIVE BEAUTY.



yellow and red in a combination where the three elements appear. The association of blue with the cold aspect of the sky on a winter's night, with ice, when seen in thick cakes, with the blue waters of the ocean, etc., has given blue a place in human consciousness that must excite the qualities with which it is associated. Blue, then, on the stage and in the house, must be looked to for sensations of coolness, repose, restraint, and formality, as well as for an antidote in case of too warm a temperature or a too excited mental state.

Green is not only yellow and blue, but light and coolness, cheer and restraint. The grass and trees in summer, combined with the blue sky, help, if the climate is exhausting, to render people comfortable and to make life agreeable. Green is a colour heralded by oculists as beneficial to the eyes, and is regarded as soothing to tired nerves and injured dispositions. It is quite right that it should be so considered, since these qualities—light and coolness, cheerfulness with moderation, rest and vitality—are intermingled equally in the sensations which green is asked to arouse when presented to the sense of sight. This makes green an admirable colour under certain circumstances to use in hot climates, in country houses, and for nervous people. When properly harmonized it may become a symphonic part of any combination under any circumstances.

The qualities of orange will also be found in yellow and red—that is, light and heat, cheerful vigour and irritation, vitality and aggression. Orange, then, unless controlled, arouses all those qualities opposed to green. It inevitably destroys the effect of repose, restraint, etc., excepting when used in counteracting combinations,



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where the control is with the other colour tones. Orange, with its accessory hues, includes such colours as browns of all kinds, red buffs, and many wood colours, as well as combinations with orange as dominant while other colours hold it in restraint so that its full power is not exercised. Small quantities of brilliant orange are possible, however, since only a small area is essential to give all the impression of that quality that is healthful for the ordinary individual.

Purple, the last of the binary colours, seems to have expressed itself even more clearly in the past, and is the most easily grasped of the three. All the qualities of red and all the qualities of blue fused together result practically in ashes. Ice and coals of fire would destroy each other; heat and arctic temperature neutralize each other; aggression and restraint balance or complement each other, and shade, quiet, or a mystic twilight result.

Purple has always been used with a mystic significance by the church and is known as royal purple because of its association with the mystic ceremonials of court life. Instinctively people have chosen purple to express the stage of mourning which exists between the period when vogue has declared pure black an expression of one's sorrow and the time when he may again wear any colour which to him seems suitable. Purple is shadow, and shadows in nature are always some purple tone. Shade, sorrow, mysticism, and dignity are the fundamental quality characteristics of this third binary colour when it is seen in its normal tone. There are many tones of this colour known in trade parlance as violet, lilac, lavender, elephant's breath, London smoke,

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mauve, etc., all of them being some manifestation of the combination of the two elements red and blue, with the addition of the other element yellow in some proportion, or of black, with purple still in control.

For a proper understanding of these colours and their real meaning it is essential to ignore the idea of vogue as it is formulated either by commercial enterprise or human fancy, and manifested from year to year in the fashions of the time. This statement must not be taken to mean that an entire room in any one of these colours is desirable under any circumstances. It is merely given to show what the introduction of any colour could mean and does mean, consciously or unconsciously, more or less, to anybody who lives in it. The word tone is the most general name in colour use. Any note of colour, including black, white, or gray, is a colour tone. The term "normal colour" is given to colour tones when they are at their fullest strength in the spectrum circuit or rainbow colour scheme. Any colour which is lighter than the normal colour is called a tint, and any colour which is darker than the normal colour, a shade. A neutral tone is a tone in which there is no apparent colour. Neutral gray, black, and white are the only true neutrals. Gold, in period study, is sometimes classed as a neutral tone, although of course it is always some modified form of yellow.

Every tone of colour has its three distinct qualities. We are apt to think of a colour as one simple thing, and to say it is either too strong or too weak without considering this fact. The first quality of a colour tone is its hue. In speaking of yellow we mean the normal primary yellow in which there is no other element pres-

ent. One should be able to detect immediately if yellow has blue in it or if red is present in the slightest degree. As soon as any blue appears in yellow it begins to be a green. This green—any green in which there is more yellow apparent than blue—is called yellow green, and all tones of green between normal green and yellow belong to the class of hues called yellow green.

Add to normal yellow the slightest bit of red, and the colour approaches orange. In fact, it is a yellow orange, and all tones made up of red and yellow, which are nearer yellow than orange, belong to the class of hues known as yellow orange. Start with normal red and by the addition of yellow the colour tone approaches orange, but red is the dominating element. In such colour tones this is red orange because it belongs to the family orange and the element red is in excess of the element yellow. If we start with normal red and add blue, the purple hues appear. So long as red is the dominating element, the hues are the red purple. If blue is the starting point, however, and red is added, the hues between normal purple and blue are blue purple. When the starting point is blue, and yellow is added, the blue begins to assume a greenish hue, and blue green is the name given to the set of hues between normal blue and normal green.

These sets of tones which are found around the binary colours express hues of colour. It will be seen then that hue is the name of the colour itself, or that it really expresses the degree of so-called heat or cold which a colour has. The hues of colour between yellow and purple, including all greens and all blues, are cool colours. Those between yellow and purple, including

all orange and red colour tones, are warm colours. It is this that gives significance to the expression "temperamental colour," one's temperament being expressed by the hues on the right or the left of the spectrum circuit.

There are two ways in which one should see the temperament idea in its relation to the subject Interior Decoration. If it is granted that certain colour tones produce, consciously and unconsciously, certain impressions or mental states in individuals living under their influence, then arises the question whether the mental state the individual enjoys most is the mental state in which he ought most often to be. For instance, I may enjoy being thrilled and stirred, warmed and excited, by orange or red in their combinations, but it may be better for me and far more agreeable for my associates if I am surrounded by green or blue: colours exercising some restraining influence upon my nature instead of catering to what is most pleasing to me in the way of emotional sensation.

In selecting material for one's self, or in advising any one what to select, it is always wise to sense as nearly as possible the psychological condition of temperament before attempting to control or augment its idiosyncrasies by environment.

The subject of hue cannot very well be left without referring to what is known as keying a colour, or the keying of a scheme of colour to a dominant hue. Much has been said and written about this dominant hue keying. It simply means this: that one of the three elements—yellow, red, or blue—must be introduced into the leading areas of a colour scheme in such a way

that one will feel its presence, although the colour itself is found in another tone in the spectrum circuit.

A very familiar violation of the rule for keying colour is found in the use of a definite wall-paper tone with perhaps a natural-wood or ivory-white trim, a hardwood floor, and a perfectly white kalsomined ceiling. White is such a combination of the primary elements of colour that no one colour is apparent. It is saturated with the three elements; in consequence, no one dominates. Colours show more strongly on it than on any other colour or on black. In white, there being no apparent colour, it is unrelated and, therefore, cannot become a part of a keyed room scheme in which there is any floor or wall colour. If the wall colour is a soft neutralized yellow or orange, then the ceiling must be keyed with that colour in a lighter tone, so that you feel the ceiling tied with an apparent colour element to the wall, of which it is really a part.

What is true of the ceiling is true of the floor. When the floor cannot be keyed to the wall, rugs should be used in which the dominating tone is that of the wall. The rugs must be keyed to the wall in order to become a part of it. Of course there are times when the rug or rugs play in the key of the trim instead of the wall paper, but in the simplest arrangement the three parts of the room—walls, floors, and ceiling—should be keyed so that there is an apparent link or common element.

It is often possible to key furniture—which, so far as the wood goes, is a foreign colour tone—to the rest of the room by upholstery in which the dominating colour is strongly keyed to the wall colour, the trim, or the floor. Preferably, key to the wall colour because



of the intimate relationship between the background of a room and the accessory objects that are to be shown against it. This is essential to unity of colour, and is the only way to secure an expression of rest, refinement and repose.

The second quality a colour tone possesses is called value. This quality takes its name from the position a tone holds in a scale of even sequence between black and white. It relates, therefore, to light, and is perfectly distinct from the quality of colour or hue. If one thinks of a graded scale from black to white in which even steps of grade are found in any number, a standard of judgment as to the meaning of the word value is easily fixed.

For example, a colour tone whose light quality is one-half way between black and white is called middle value. In a scale of nine tones, one-half way between middle and white is called light, one-half way between light and middle is called low light, and one-half way between light and white is called high light. In the same way, one-half way between middle and black is dark, while one-half way between middle and dark is high dark, and one-half way between middle and black is low dark.

These values, though arbitrary, are equidistant in light quality from each other, and standardize the value idea, thereby helping one to disassociate the value quality from the hue quality previously discussed. It is difficult at first to see each quality as a separate idea, but only in so doing is one able to understand how to select and arrange colours in composition so that each tone serves its full purpose and does not conflict in

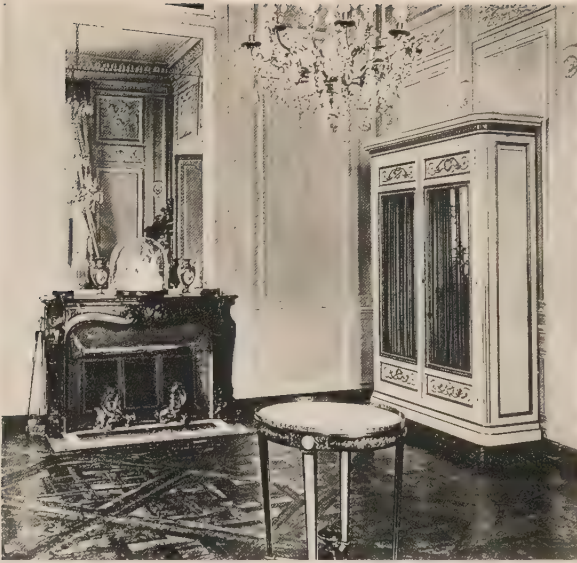
## INTERIOR DECORATION

any one quality while seeming to agree in the other two.

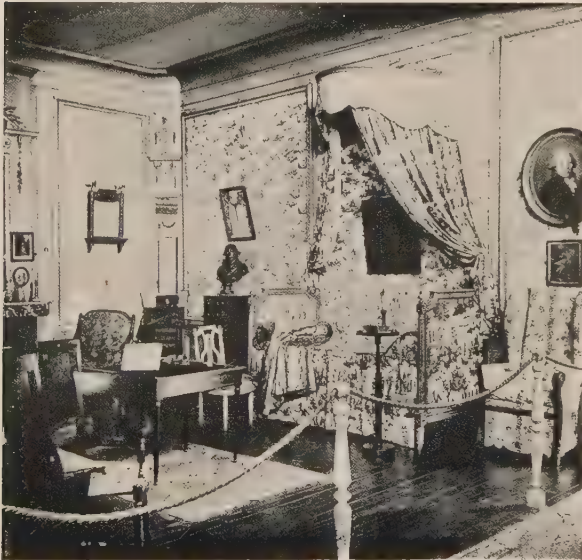
The preëminent importance of the room as a background for the application of the decorative idea cannot be too often emphasized. The question of value in relation to background is a delicate but important one. To arrange this background in such a way that no part of it becomes too important, aggressive, or forceful is the problem, and a right choice of values contributes more toward solving it successfully than, perhaps, any one quality in colour choice.

The old conviction that the trim must stand out as distinctly as possible from the wall cover is antagonistic to the background idea. If the wall cover and trim are different in hue, it is almost necessary that their values should be practically the same. In fact, if both hue and value are the same, the result is not only more pleasing, but far more sensible in cases where the trim is painted or enamelled. Where a natural-wood trim is involved, it is sometimes more difficult to adjust the question of hue; but if there is a hue difference, the value difference should not be in too great a contrast, as it immediately establishes hard and inconsistent lines. The strong appeal of these lines is hard to neutralize by decorative treatment without causing the room to become crude and unrestful in its final quality.

In some periods, it is true, ivory-white woodwork and a middle-value wall colour appear with mahogany furniture and, sometimes, mahogany doors. This, however, is a condition of period which was influenced somewhat by the popularity or vogue of mahogany wood, somewhat by the unusual idea of spick and span



A. A HISTORIC ROOM IN THE STYLE OF LOUIS XVI, WHOSE BACKGROUND IS A PROPER SETTING FOR FURNITURE AND DECORATIONS.



B. A HISTORIC ROOM IN FRENCH STYLE WHOSE BACKGROUND IS UNSUITED TO FURTHER DECORATIVE EFFECTS AND WHOSE ARRANGEMENT DISREGARDS DECORATIVE LAW. WALL PAPERS ARE OFTEN USED IN MODERN ROOMS WITH THE SAME EFFECT.



cleanliness which the Colonial period sought, not only to establish, but to promulgate, and somewhat by the desire for a note dark enough in value to give strength and definite form to the side wall, in order that it should relate itself in some way to a darker floor or, perhaps, darker rugs and carpets and furniture.

We derive from those historic periods whose styles are most adaptable to our modern conditions the law of a lighter ceiling, a midway side wall and a darker floor.

This is reasonable and sensible, since man in his natural environment has lived under these conditions when outside the house. If one looks about him in the country he finds the sky lighter than the far-away hills, the far-away hills lighter in value than the shadow under the tree where he stands. This is taken by many as the fundamental reason why the room feels more comfortable when the value relations are placed in this order.

There is probably still another reason why one intuitively feels these relative positions. The law of gravitation, pulling or attracting always toward the centre of the earth, establishes in all persons a feeling for a strong base on which to rest and upon which other objects may repose. If the order of values is reversed, having the darkest value overhead, one cannot help feeling the possibility of a falling ceiling which must result in a crushed and crumbling floor, it not being dark enough to support the falling weight.

When the floor—sometimes a hardwood finish—is lighter than the wall, the value relations may be adjusted by the use of darker rugs. In fact, this is the only way to give the proper feeling of structure and rest



to the room unit when it is completed. This, in part, settles the value relation of the floor to the walls and ceiling. Care is necessary, however, in final criticism, that the rugs do not spot or badly outline themselves against the light floor. It would be better to treat the floor in such a way that the rugs do not become an aggressive addition. It is the place of a rug to lie inconspicuously and quietly on a floor. The very function of the floor, the fact that we walk on it, and the horizontal position of the rug itself are all reasons why it should be modest, eliminating the disposition on the part of the individual to centre his interest upon a place where he should walk and place his feet without conscious calculation.

The value idea extends to something more than backgrounds. It is a quality of every single object in the decorating and furnishing scheme. The hangings are a decorative idea, and are to be used, as suggested in a previous chapter, to emphasize and beautify the structural opening with which they are associated. The question of their contrast with the background is in each case a new one but, fundamentally, they should be stronger in contrast than the trim with the wall cover or the wall, as a whole, with the ceiling or floor. These background parts are to be seen as a unit.

The hangings constitute the first decorative idea to be considered in the scheme of furnishing. The starched white lace curtains of half a century ago—the strongest possible contrast in value between the wall and themselves—have generally disappeared as persons of refinement have appreciated, quite intuitively maybe, that these introduced an element in no way keyed to the rest

of the wall, and generally in no way possible, since they seemed totally unrelated to their surroundings.

If the trim of some room perchance is white, the ceiling white, and the furniture painted white, the white lace curtains or white muslin ones are a part of the decorative scheme. Where colour, however, in hue dominates the decorative scheme, white curtains are quite impossible.

Rugs are probably more often badly related in values than any other one article used in furnishing a house. The epidemic of Oriental rugs has been so severe in the last twenty-five years that the term and cost have become synonymous with the idea "effective floor covering." The floor is, as previously remarked, covered for comfort and to make it more beautiful by softening the wood appearance, and adding texture.

The idea of comfort and luxury in sitting or walking has brought the rug into universal use. Oriental rugs were not, for the most part, produced in response to the need which has just been mentioned. Various forms and decorative motifs have been created, some for their religious significance, some as family symbols, and others out of totally unrelated art expressions. They have been woven in rug forms much as the Gothic spirit expressed itself in tapestries, the Renaissance in carved wood and chiselled stone, or New England Colonial architecture in bricks and white marble. The unrelated and confusing medallion and shapes of that sort must be so closely related in value that they are not only inconspicuous but almost eliminated before the rug has any of the qualities necessary for harmonizing it with the floor or with the structural characteristics

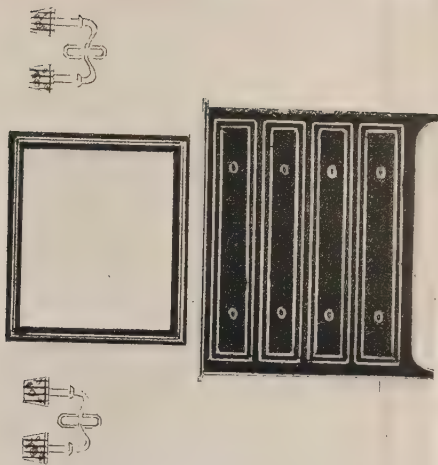
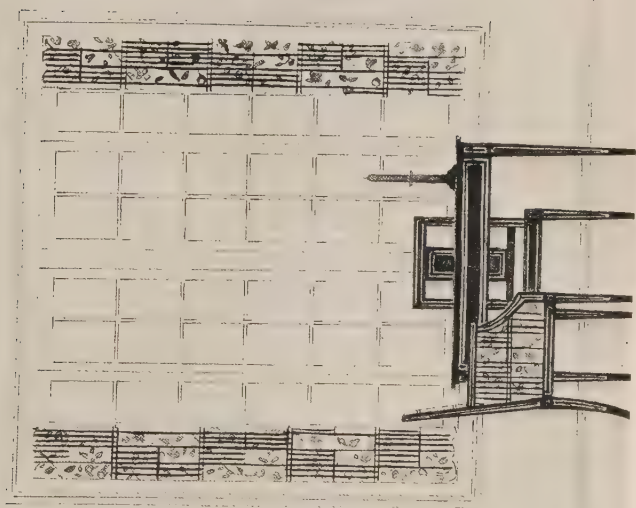
## INTERIOR DECORATION

of the furniture to be placed upon it. This is particularly evident where patterns appear on backgrounds of white, light yellow, or other strong values that make the pattern more important than is the structural edge of the rug upon the floor.

These distracting shapes are often the reason for an unrestful, undignified, and inartistic impression one has on entering even the most luxurious of modern houses. Since the floor is a background, since chairs must be seen upon it, as well as people, and since it is unimportant as a show place when compared with the walls, it must be as inconspicuous as they are in value relations. This rule might be applied to each article in the room, but perhaps one or two more concrete instances may make the meaning clearer.

The Italian Renaissance developed probably the most dignified, strong, and formal chair the world has yet seen. It was also, in proportion, one of the most beautiful. Its wood was dark in value and it was covered, until the decadent period, in a dark red, green, or blue tone. This value differs little, if any, from the wood itself, but emphasizes the decorative idea by change of hue and intensity only.

There was a time—and the fad is still cherished by some people—when pictures, particularly prints, photographs, and engravings were matted on white. When a brown photograph is mounted on white and a dark brown frame is placed around (which should always be the case), the strongest contrast is found where the frame and mat meet. “Strongest contrast” means “strongest desire to look.” Granting that the picture is the thing to be seen and that the strongest contrast



ELEVATION SKETCH IN BLACK, WHITE, AND ONE COLOUR, EXPRESSING THE FEELING OF A YOUNG BOY'S BEDROOM, DECORATIVELY CHOSEN AND ARRANGED, IN OCCULT BALANCE.





between the picture and its adjacent environment would draw the attention of the observer to it, the mat is not only a non-essential but a positive hindrance to a proper appreciation of the picture itself.

Applications of this idea of close value relationships where things should be unobtrusive and should possess wider value contrasts, where the desire to emphasize is compatible with good taste, establish a standard of judgment or criticism which any person may use on any room with effective results.

The third colour quality is called intensity. This quality takes its name from the colour itself, and relates to its vitality or individual strength. In common parlance we speak of brilliant colours and soft ones, sometimes of brilliant and pastel. This quality is the one which shows how much vitality or personal force a colour tone possesses. Full intense colours, particularly those spectrum hues which have been discussed, express in the strongest way the idea for which they stand.

For example, a normal blue, which is blue at dark in value, is at its fullest intensity; that is, it is as forceful a blue as can be made. If I make it lighter I weaken it by putting white or water into it. If I darken it I also weaken it, because I must do so with black, it being just as full of the colour itself as it can get. This same thing is true of all other colour hues at their normal maturity point.

Black, which is the absence of colour, should be understood here because it is this tone which absorbs colour when it is brought in contact with it as a surface. For example, colour is stronger displayed on white than

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it is on black, all things being equal, because white does not absorb and black does. An illustration of this is seen in its application to persons. White, worn next the face, leaves all the colour the individual has apparent to an observer. Black absorbs or extracts colour and, for most people, is impossible when in contact or close juxtaposition to the skin of the face.

It is essential to remember this in the treatment of colour in relation to its intensity quality. Pairs of colours, or opposite ones, in the spectrum circuit, are called complements. One colour complements another because it contains always the two other elements which its opposite lacks. For example, orange is made of equal forces of yellow and red. Its complement is normal blue.

In the pigment circuit purple is the union of equal forces of red and blue. The missing element, yellow, is its complement. While green unites in equal power yellow and blue, the missing element red complements it.

Since yellow, red, and blue fused in equal forces produce a neutral gray, green and red mixed in the same way also produce gray. This is equally true of orange and blue, of purple and yellow, and, in fact, of any opposite spectrum hues, such as yellow orange and blue violet, yellow green and red violet, red orange and blue green. Each of these pairs neutralizes the other and is, therefore, complementary in its relationship.

A colour is neutralized by introducing into it as a normal colour the normal complement. In proportion as the complement enters into it, it loses its own natural vital force, and not only holds itself in restraint, but

takes on a certain proportion of the qualities of the other two elements which have been introduced into it. The result is a colour neutralized by its complement. See how subtle relationships may become to him who understands grayed or neutralized colours.

Green—a union of light, cheer, coolness, and restraint, harmonized and modified by the proper amount of heat and vigour—becomes a subtle compound of the essential qualities of colour. It expresses one's idea of the dominant position of each in the individual problem which is being worked out.

Due regard to this matter of intensity in colour and its right management is probably the most effective means by which one may use ordinary things, so that their effect shall at least not be aggressive, commonplace, or harmful.

When one-half the vitality of a colour has been destroyed by its complement it is said to be half neutralized. It then has one-half itself plus one-fourth each of the other two elements of colour. Its own idea or quality is still dominant and it controls the quality elements of the other two, but uses them to soften its own appeal.

Colour tones may be less or more than one-half neutralized; in fact, there may be as many tones between a normal colour and a perfect gray as one's eye is able to distinguish, and no more. This process by which the colour loses its self-force by the introduction of its complement is called the process of neutralization.

The application of the principle of intensity to the problem of the house is the same as the application of the value power, except that its relation to the back-

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ground is even more important than in the case of any other colour quality.

Full, intense colour is the loudest, strongest, most forceful appeal of the idea for which it stands. It should, then, be reserved for the few things which one wishes to make emphatic in any scheme of colour composition. If the vital force of each colour tone is expended on unnecessary and unimportant things, what shall we do about the things to which we would call particular attention?

In music special stress or emphasis of tone is reserved for those chords or passages which must be brought home to the hearer with particular strength. If the full power of an orchestra is expended on introductory, explanatory, and non-essential passages, in what way shall the vital ones receive particular stress? The analogy between this idea and the human voice in talking is easily grasped, and the same idea should be seen with equal clearness in reference to the intensity emphasis in colour appeal as to when and where to use it with effect.

Applied to backgrounds there is one principle that is fundamental and final in any field of expression. "Backgrounds must be less intense in colour than objects which are to be effectively shown on them."

What a revelation in window dressing there would be if persons responsible for them were not more anxious to show an inartistic and ugly grained or highly polished woodwork than they were the modest articles displayed upon this background! Or what a change would be seen if the velvet or velour drapery backgrounds of these windows were not of a colour far stronger in in-



BEDROOM IN COUNTRY INN, WITH SUITABLE WALL AND FLOOR, EXPRESSING REST AND QUIET. CHINTZ IS THE DECORATIVE MOTIF, PRACTICALLY USED AND PLEASINGLY DISTRIBUTED TO GIVE TOUCHES OF MORE INTENSE COLOUR.





tensity than any of the goods the shopkeeper asks the public to observe.

The room, particularly one in which people must live, is a very much more important matter. This is true not only because of the qualities which the background of the room must unite but also because decoration of any kind or description becomes impossible unless conditions are right to begin with. Then, too, the room exists in a house, generally speaking, for people rather than for objects of furniture. This is a consideration to which very few give sufficient weight. During the daytime and evening, in varying conditions of feeling, appearance, and dress, one must be seen by the family and one's friends must be exploited against the background of the room.

Take a soft neutralized tone of yellow, green, or blue wall paper, and upon it place small pieces, one at a time, of the most intense red, blue, green, yellow, purple, and orange silk or paper. See how this neutralized background makes it possible for each small piece of vital colour to do its full work as the expression of a personal idea. Take small pieces of the same colours, a little less intense, and see that it is possible for each of these colours to express its idea while the background does not materially interfere with it. Conceive one's self in the place of these pieces of silk or paper, and it is not difficult to imagine that the result would be somewhat similar.

Reverse this process, and take large pieces of full, intense colours as backgrounds, and upon them try to show small pieces of very neutralized colour tones. It will quickly be seen that these colours not only are of no merit whatever, as colour, but are neutralized or de-

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stroyed, at least in part, by the ferocious onslaught of the background idea. This sweeps on, because of its intensity and area, to the utter destruction of everything with which it comes in contact. Furniture, pictures, ornament, and persons disappear and become as nothing when compared with its full intensity.

From this last illustration two other important lessons may be drawn as to the areas or relative areas in which intensities may appear and still express their fundamental ideas.

The neutralized background of a wall with a half intense or even more intense hanging may be used with a small lamp shade, or bit of interesting ornament, or pottery, of a full intense colour, and each have its share of importance. The larger the area, under ordinary conditions, the less intense a colour should be and conversely, the smaller the area the more intense a colour may be, the actual degree of intensity, of course, depending upon the amount of stress or emphasis one is willing to give that particular thing.

This thought would be incomplete unless a caution were given in regard to the intensity of the rug or parts of it. The most effective rug is that in which the whole is keyed by one colour with all others subordinating themselves to this keyed idea. If this is not possible, intensity relations, as well as value relations, should be so close that no one part of the rug seems unduly important. As has been said, no part of the floor is a picture gallery or place to exploit shapes, forms, or colours at the expense of the tone unit for which the floor stands. If, on the other hand, any part of the rug must be intense, the law of intensity as to areas should

certainly be observed and in a most conservative manner.

Let the interesting and vitally decorative spots and lines of the room have the intense colour emphasis. Let this appear also in single objects, and the third or intensity quality of colours will be considered in a way that makes this quality a fundamental force in interior decoration.

A knowledge of the qualities of each colour, its hue, tone, value and intensity, should lead to a conscious, sensible application of that knowledge in the fields that have been suggested. This leads naturally to the question of harmony in colour, which is essential to the selection and arrangement of a scheme for furnishing a room.

By harmony is meant agreement or concord. When there is perfect agreement, complete harmony results and a somewhat monotonous condition is felt. In music the major scale is the simplest expression of tonal relation. A composition wholly in the major chord, without any introduction of the so-called accidental, is simple, somewhat primitive and, to most people, a bit tiresome. A knowledge of the right time and the right way to use the accidental, or the unexpected idea, enables one to add the charm of subtlety and to increase the interest.

A room presents an admirable opportunity for the working out of this idea. The novice, or even the artist, should know the law and be able to obey it perfectly before he may break it. A deviation from the established form in any expression is the so-called poet's license, or artist's license, granted to the masters of the situation and not to the rank and file of the uninformed.

## INTERIOR DECORATION

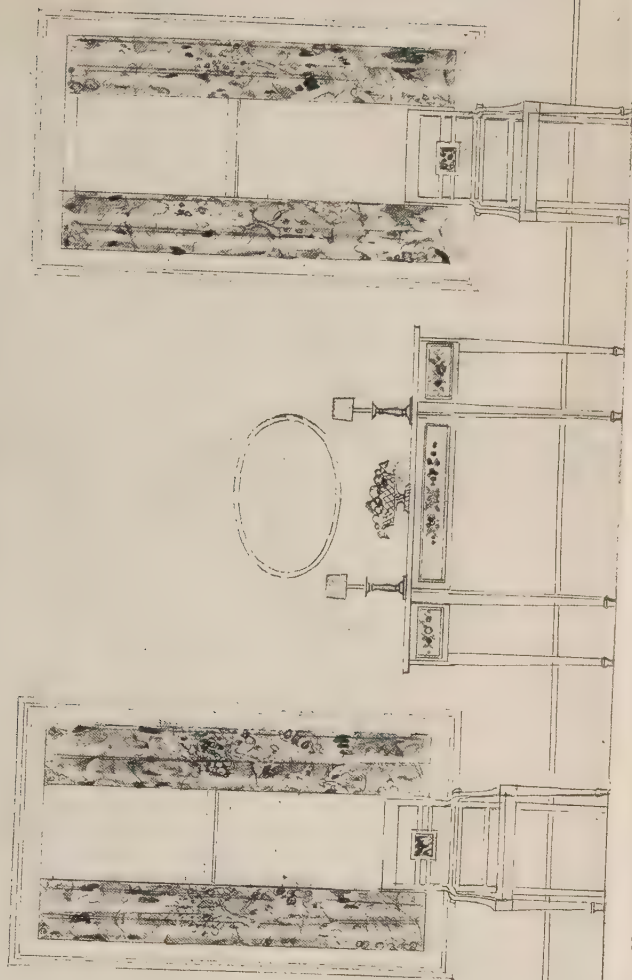
It is essential that harmony be accepted, not only as the desirable criterion, but also as the basic idea for all effective composition. Colour harmony, like harmony in sound, is based upon tonal relationships. There are generally conceded to be two kinds—those of likeness and those of contrast or difference. This likeness is sometimes called analogy or relationship or natural agreement. It may be illustrated with the colour green, which is a union of yellow and blue in equal force. Green is, therefore, as much related to yellow as to blue, and is one-half related to each. It is, therefore, somewhat harmonious with each from the outset.

Blue green is three parts blue and one part yellow, thus being in closer harmony with blue than with yellow. It may be used with yellow because it has one part at least in common, and is therefore related to it, though in the quality of harmony it is not so closely associated.

Yellow green, on the other hand, is more harmonious with yellow than with blue because of its component parts. Yellow, it will be seen, is a common element in yellow green, green, and blue green. Therefore, these four form what is known as a related or analogous harmony in colour. Any two, three, or the whole four selected in their proper values with right intensity relations become a colour harmony of the first kind or the likeness type. If yellow be considered with yellow orange, orange, and red orange, it forms a family relationship in which two, three, or four tones may form a group.

Normal yellow and normal red, or normal yellow and normal blue, are not related and may, therefore, not be





ELEVATION SUGGESTING WALL AND FURNITURE TREATMENT FOR A SIMPLE DINING ROOM IN A COUNTRY HOUSE; CHINTZ AND PAINTED FURNITURE. BRILLIANT COLOURS IN SMALL AREAS IN SOFT GRAY BACKGROUND.



## THE DECORATIVE IDEA

considered together in any one of these groups. Yet if red is the standard colour chosen, red orange, orange, and yellow orange are each related to it, and a third analogous family is seen. If blue, blue green, green, and yellow green are chosen a fourth group appears.

The same thing is true in the consideration of purples. Blue, blue purple, purple, and red purple form a group; red, red purple, purple, and blue purple form another group.

This method of producing a colour harmony is the simplest because the colour tones are themselves related in their inherent makeup. Even if two or more of them appear in quite intense tones, a concord or agreement in natural forces makes their harmonizing appear simpler, although it is in reality cruder, and it is generally very temperamental in its choice and use.

If one intuitively chooses schemes in house decoration in which blue, blue green, green and yellow green dominate, it is apt to be for temperamental or climatic reasons, or, perchance, because of too much light in the particular locality in which the problem is worked out. If the soft browns, tans, or buffs in the realm of red orange, orange, and yellow orange are selected, the same conditions of temperament or location probably influenced their choice.

The introduction of the complementary colour would necessarily bring in the three or four elements of colour possibility. The analogous scheme never presents this chance. With the analogous scheme, however, it is possible to introduce complementary small notes or areas which may be called the accidentals in the established colour scheme.

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The second phase of colour harmony is known as complementary, this being harmony of contrast. Full intense complements are dissimilar in every particular. No part of yellow or its qualities is found in purple, no quality of blue in orange, nor of red in green. As full intense normal colours these are totally unrelated and are the most inharmonious possible colour tones when used next to each other without any separation by a neutral tone. Nothing can be cruder, harsher, or more commonplace than a rug in red and green. With these colour tones in juxtaposition it is impossible for the eye to accept the resulting condition, and every one knows the vibration or blurred effect produced by an attempt to accommodate the eye to such a colour combination.

The same is true of orange and blue and purple and yellow, though, perhaps, in a somewhat lesser degree because of the luminosity quality of colour which is to be considered later.

Neutralization, or the use of neutralized colour tones in complements, is the method by which harmony is obtained. One-half neutral green and one-half neutral red are harmonious because each has introduced into it one-half of the other colour qualities of the spectrum. The one-half neutral colours may be supplemented with other tones of the same colours, more or less neutralized, and the harmony remains. It is a question of the degree of inter-relationships in the number of tones used, their relative areas, and the juxtaposition of tones appearing in the composition. Full intense colours should not be brought near each other. The less intense are more harmonious when closely associated. Those still less intense are the best backgrounds for the exploitation

of the more intense ones. The small areas of intense colour show best and are strongest in their emphasis against the more neutralized ones of the complementary colour.

Concrete instances of the application of the complementary scheme to specific rooms will be given during the discussion of such rooms in later chapters. As a working basis, however, it is essential to know the terms employed, and to recognize the use and misuse of these fundamental methods of creating colour harmonies.

A third type, still under the head of harmony of contrast, is called the triad scheme. This scheme involves the choice and use of three colour tones selected from the spectrum based on the equilateral triangle and it requires an intricate knowledge of neutralization, localization of areas, and emphasis distribution. It is a scheme too difficult to explain clearly in this fundamental treatment of colour. The two types of harmony first discussed are those most generally in use and are sufficient for all ordinary problems if understood and applied.

All are not alike sensitive to colour appeal. Each one of us differs from all others in how much or what will give us just sufficient stimulation. It is a constant source of psychological interest to adjust to each person's taste and needs the colours used. This is an individual problem and can be solved successfully only when the decorator sees first the person whose tastes and needs are to be consulted. The question of materials must next be considered, and then the decorator must bring into use all his knowledge of colour forces. In this way he will arrive at the best result



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both as regards the pleasure and comfort of his client and the further growth of his own colour appreciation.

There is still one element of power which a colour tone possesses that it may be well to consider at this point. By the arrangement of the spectrum circuit, yellow, being the nearest to light or white, is the lightest normal colour in value. It is the first colour tone in sequence of values running from yellow to green, blue and purple on one side, and from yellow, orange and red to purple on the other.

Purple is the darkest in value of the normal colour tones and the nearest to black. Black, being the absence of light and the absence of colour, is darkness, while purple approaches this blackness more nearly than any other.

Light is the opposite element of darkness or shadow; therefore, yellow contains the greatest lighting power of any normal spectrum colour. While orange and green are of the same value in the spectrum circuit, orange has a greater lighting power because of the introduction of red, which is a greater light producer than blue.

The order, then, of this light-giving quality, which I shall call luminosity, may be stated as follows: yellow, orange, green, red, blue, and purple.

The luminosity of a colour is worthy of consideration in interior decoration where the amount of light which the room receives is a matter for conservation. This would also be important when a light room is so glaringly bright that it is impossible to obtain desired results in colour keying.

At the normal maturity point the relative luminosity



CHARMING FEMINE SITTING-ROOM IN WHICH THE SIMPLICITY OF WALLS, CEILING AND FLOOR ACCENTUATE THE DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT OF MANTEL, MIRROR, WINDOWS, WALL SPACINGS, WELL-BALANCED ARRANGEMENT OF FURNITURE, PLACED FOR COMFORT AND USE. EXCELLENT MIRROR AND PICTURE FRAME, WITH PICTURE IN SPIRIT WITH THE ROOM AND ITS FURNISHINGS. A PERFECT ILLUSTRATION OF GRAY BACKGROUND INTERESTINGLY TREATED. INTENSE COLOURS—PROPER PLACES FOR DECORATIVE EFFECTS.



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of colours runs approximately as follows: yellow 12; orange 9; green 7; red 5; blue 3; and purple 1. While these numbers are not exact, they are near enough for practical purposes in determining what effect luminosity has on the choice of colour.

Artificial light, shining through a yellow shade lined with white, has a much more penetrating and far-reaching effect than the same light shining through a green shade lined with white, the textures of the material being the same. If blue or purple were used, the lighting effect would be greatly lessened, in fact it would be in the above mentioned ratio, were the colours of normal hue and intensity. If purple is used, particularly blue purple, with artificial light, representing nearly a yellow orange, the light not only fails to do its work as an illuminating agent, but it becomes neutralized, grayed, softened and destroyed.

Any one interested in seeing results of this quality power should experiment with different full intense colours and the same light, noticing the effect of each upon adjacent objects in the room. It must also be observed that the quality of the light filtered through these different colour tones is changed or modified greatly in hue and value, and also frequently in intensity, thereby creating a new light which will in turn modify the colours of all objects upon which it shines.

Far too little care is given to the selection and use of colour as it is affected by lighting.

A knowledge of the principles of relationship, resulting from a study of hue, value and intensity is the key to a right choice of colour schemes. It will insure the production of any colour effect desired.

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The danger of upsetting completely the room scheme by the use of the wrong colour in a lamp shade, the wrong window hangings, or any other thing through which light is filtered, is increased tenfold when the background is too intense in colour. Remember that the background of a room must be less intense than the objects which are to appear against it, or the objects themselves lose their force as decorative things.

It is well probably to notice here a reason for the one striking difference between a warm and cold background in its general colour effect.

All good decorators and artistic people in general know that there is a pleasanter general aspect in a room where the background is keyed to yellow or orange rather than to green or blue; that is if the background is gray, or so nearly so that it seems to be gray. It is difficult if the gray is a blue gray, or in other words a neutralized blue, to get between the objects of furniture and the room a general effect of colours keyed together. On the other hand, if the gray is a yellow gray or orange gray, be it never so nearly neutral, there seems to be in this colour itself an invitation to furnishing objects to become a part of the general scheme of colour.

This is due to two facts: first, all wood naturally falls into the warm side of the spectrum, highly neutralized. Floors are usually treated in warm colour, and often many of the other decorative colours in the room are on the warm side of the spectrum. This establishes a common element or a relationship which at once invites harmony. If into such a room blues or greens are introduced, it is usually in upholstery, hangings, rugs, or other decorative features, and one can afford to em-



phasize the decorative feature by exactly that contrast, while the constructive features would outline in an ugly manner against the background if the same contrast were introduced in their case.

Another reason why the warm tones are in general more satisfactory is that the kind of reflected light which they radiate as natural light, which is very often cool, cold, and forbidding, is reflected from them. It also simplifies keying with shades when artificial lighting is required.

This explanation will make it easier for any one who feels the lack of relationship existing between furnishings and background to select or treat backgrounds in such a way that the furnishings of the room are more harmonious. They may thus without effort be drawn into the general scheme of unity in colour which every good room must express.

There is one other aspect of colour that we must touch upon here so that the thought of colour as it relates to the decorative idea may be more nearly complete. If, however, each subject were explained and illustrated in all its possible phases, it would require a separate volume.

History is a record of the lives or activities of peoples of an earlier time and of the civilization they have evolved. It is expressed in literature, music, architecture, sculpture, furniture, textiles, and also in the lesser crafts. Its art expression has been unlike in different eras, and quite dissimilar in the case of diverse nations, while individuals of the same nation have frequently shown distinct variations.

Perhaps the national feeling for a type of expression may be as easily seen in colour as in any form of expres-

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sion. How this national preference, when acting with other concrete forces, has produced periods in art and historical or decorative styles, is a matter for later consideration. Now, however, it is pertinent to see something of the way colour has expressed the standardized quality of feeling which a nation possessed at the time the period form was crystallized.

The people of the Spanish Peninsula have for many centuries been quite unmixed, since the Moorish invasion, with races of different blood. Different ideals and customs, native instincts, climatic conditions, partial isolation and the religious and social practices of these people have all tended to establish and maintain certain unbroken traditions in all forms of expression. The result of traditional living, inherited and promoted by environment, tends to establish a national temperament. We all recognize the extreme fondness of such races for intense colours and almost always colours on the warm side of the spectrum circuit. The use of yellow, red, and orange to excite the already infuriated bull is one of the visible manifestations of the conscious knowledge on the part of the people of the effect on the animal instinct of these warm colour combinations. Colour is a stimulant to the æsthetic sense. It is certain that this race of people is stimulated by these colours more than by cold colours; hence the choice of red, yellow, gold, orange, etc., in so much of the art expression of their period styles.

The natives of Italy are a far less homogeneous people. Southern Italy—so thoroughly Greek at times as to be almost a part of Greece itself, and influenced always by the Orient and the African Barbary states



MAN'S STUDIO LIVING-ROOM, SHOWING HOW A LARGE NUMBER OF OBJECTS MAY, THROUGH THE PRINCIPLES OF GROUPING, BE SO ARRANGED AS TO GIVE THE EFFECT OF SIMPLICITY, QUIET AND DIGNITY THROUGHOUT. CEILING, WALLS AND TRIM A SOFT, WARM GRAY, PRACTICALLY THE SAME TONE. THE FLOOR A DARKER TONE IN THE SAME MODE. NOTICE RELATIONS OF DISTANCE BETWEEN PICTURE AND MANTEL; TERRA COTTA AND TABLE; GOTHIC PANEL AND CABINET.



—has the Oriental colour ideas prevailing in its earlier art expressions as well as in its colour choice of to-day. Northern Italy, on the contrary, less influenced by the Greek and the Orient, less mixed in blood with those countries, more open always to invasion from the north, and more blended and involved with the Teutonic idea, has developed a love for cooler colours. It perhaps exhibits a wider range, or at least a more refined conception of relationships in values and intensities.

French consciousness combines the colour preferences of more peoples, gathered from a broader range of area, and a wider scope in kind. There is also a native tendency to amalgamate these in a greater degree than among any other living people. France, always susceptible to new forms of expressing the æsthetic idea, gave birth to and developed Gothic thought, accepted and digested the Italian Renaissance, and developed its own distinct period styles. It destroyed the monarchic expression of those styles and built a new republic which has inexhaustible mines of art wealth accumulated since the tenth century to draw upon as an adequate means of expressing modern ideas.

This explains why the French have long been supreme in the realm of the fine arts as well as in the applied or practical arts of life. They are adepts in the solution of problems of artistic expression in furnishings, clothing, and the use of accessory objects.

The qualities of the English are so at variance with the French that but to mention their character and their ideals produces in the mind quite a different conception. One is reminded at once of those qualities that have made the English styles less flippant, less



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changeable, less erratic in value change, more general in hue appreciation and more sombre in intensity relation than those of any of the other nations that we have mentioned.

In like manner, it would be simple enough to see why the Netherlands, Flanders, Germany, or any other country has developed a special liking for or tendency to the use of some particular gamut of colour. The reason for the choice is always found in the quality of the consciousness of the people who are to use colour.

One instinctively selects that symbol in any field which most clearly illustrates or describes the idea which he wishes to convey. If a highly neutralized colour is more restful than a more intense one, and I desire rest, when intense colours and neutralized ones are before me, I instinctively select the neutralized one. It is, of course, implied that I realize the force of the symbol.

If light, bright blues, pinks, and yellows express anything, they express light-hearted, youthful, rather flippant and old-fashioned feminine attributes. When a man looks about for a colour scheme for his library, den, or sleeping-room, he instinctively leaves such things alone. They do not express his qualities, nor those with which he desires to concern himself when he wishes to concentrate on his work, or to sleep and rest.

We, the people of the United States of America, are the most conglomerate of all peoples. We have, without having had time to amalgamate the characteristics of any people, received all peoples with open arms, until we are a nation one hundred million strong and represent nearly every form and grade of civilization. Naturally we are a people of many minds, many

ideas, with distinctively individual and peculiar qualities, striving to be a nation. Our national colour expression can be nothing short of every colour available. We do not limit ourselves in any other field. We cannot limit ourselves in the range of colours used.

Because this is true, it is of the greatest importance that we seek to understand from every possible source what qualities may be expressed by different combinations, and learn to use those combinations to express individual ideas in moderation and with discretion.

But even this is not the most important thing to know. A people is mentally—and that means morally, intellectually, and ethically—made up of its inherited tendencies and whatever is taken into consciousness through the five senses. Environment is a mighty factor in the development of a people whose æsthetic sense is commensurate with the task before them of maintaining a commercial relationship which is thrust upon them by the very nature of their existence. Not only must we have the æsthetic quality in order that it may appear in our products, but we demand this quality as a natural means of refinement and culture. Its function is to satisfy the inherent desire for beauty which nature has decreed shall be a part of man's general makeup.

To historic periods, then, we must turn not only to know their structural forms, their decorative ideas, and their finished art objects, but to understand their colour as scientifically, logically and sensibly as we know their other forms of expression. To express the Tudor period in the colours of Louis XVI is as impossible a task as it would be for Queen Elizabeth to impersonate Marie Antoinette.

## PART I

## CHAPTER II

### THE PRINCIPLES OF FORM AND THEIR RELATION TO THE DECORATIVE IDEA

THE term "design" has generally meant the choice and arrangement of certain shapes or forms to produce a decorative effect. It should include not only form but colour, or rather colour and form, for without colour there is no form.

If all objects were exactly the same colour tone it would be impossible to see where one object left off and the other began. In fact, there would be no shapes or forms to discuss. The greater the colour contrast in hue, value, or intensity, or any two or three of these qualities, the more clearly defined is the form arrangement which these objects produce.

The real recognition of form is a mental process, and it is sufficient to remark here that this is a comparison of previously acquired ideas. Form is not quickly perceived through the sense of sight like colour. This makes the study of form more involved and perhaps, in many cases, less easily understood at first.

Design or composition includes, then, the choice and arrangement of colours, forms and lines with a unit as the desired result. This unit may be the exterior of a huge cathedral, the interior of any room, the individual

unit used in any one of these, or whatever in itself expresses the unit idea.

As has already been noted, the structure is the fundamental reason for all decorated things. The build or structure determines the form. The form, then, conversely, is the result of structural lines of certain kinds used in certain combinations to represent individual ideas. When we realize that everything depends upon the structural idea it is much easier to see relationships between shapes or forms in furnishing construction and the room in which they are to be used, than if we see parts of furnishing objects or colours or decorations only.

An Italian chair of the early fifteenth century is built on horizontal and vertical lines. Its construction is rectangular and for its beauty it depends upon its simplicity, its exquisite proportion, and its consistent decorative additions. In no field of chair construction has there been a result so dignified, formal, stable, consistent, sincere, and architecturally connected with the house as this beautiful expression of the early Italian Renaissance. The very lines or structure of this chair repeat the lines of room construction.

The same fine feeling for proportion, structural likeness, simplicity and consistency is found in the cabinets, tables, and other objects of furniture during this period of expression. With objects like these it is easy enough to recognize an element harmonizing with the structure of a room, its side walls, its floor and its ceiling.

On the other hand, with furniture of the period of Louis XV in France, where the boundary of every structural part is a curved line of the most subtle char-

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acter, it is far more difficult to establish relations of harmony between it and the constructive lines of a modern house. It is the character, or kind of line which bounds these forms, that I ask you to notice particularly now.

Very often textiles, wall covers and other objects present exactly the same difficulty. A chair is to become a decorative motif in a room as a background, or a piece of ornament is to become a decorative motif on a textile rug or article of furniture. Either by placing or by its structural lines it must harmonize with the room, with the articles of furniture, and with the textile or other object upon which it is to appear as a decorative unit. Often harmonious motifs are wholly unrelated to the object upon which they are placed, and become glaringly undecorative because their entire line or form effect has no common harmonizing elemental line in concord with the article which it purports to decorate.

It will be seen that the structure is the reason for the decoration, that the decoration must conform to the structure, and that there must be a common element of harmony between the original form and the decorative object used with it.

The first principle of form I shall call consistent structural unity. The façade of a house is an excellent example for structural and decorative study. The vertical and horizontal lines bounding it at least on two of these sides are emphasized, supported and strengthened by cornices. There is a change in treatment at the edges, brought about by the introduction of doors and windows whose structures are in harmony with that of



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the side of the house, and sometimes with other objects related in the same way.

Not only, however, are these objects related by their general form to the house, of which they are a part, but they are, if pleasing, so placed, when seen in groups, that their bounding lines are horizontal and vertical. When this form does not obtain—for example, if there is one window, then another, and then another lower still—there is a feeling of incongruity and unpleasantness arising from an arrangement which does not harmonize with the general structure form of the façade.

Brought into the house the application of these principles is legion. Most persons see and feel quickly the violation of such a rule on the outside, but fail utterly to grasp the need of the same relationship on the inside.

Let us take first the floor of the room. This is an oblong or a square, infrequently modified by a curved window or some other curved line of unnatural growth. This establishes something of the line of the furniture, but something still more of the arrangement of this furniture as to its place on the floor.

Now let us consider the rug. A common error is to throw the rug—particularly if there are several in the room—upon the floor in an oblique or cat-a-cornered position so that no line boundary of the rug is parallel to or in harmony with the bounding lines of the floor. This immediately establishes a new decorative idea, built on top of the original one. Chairs, tables, divans and other furniture must be placed either with the structural suggestion of the rugs, or with the original structural arrangement of the room. Both lines cannot be followed.

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One must dominate. The only sensible thing is to place the rugs in harmony with the structure of the floor; then let the tables, divans, chairs, cabinets and other articles of furniture be placed in the same horizontal and vertical structural relationship.

This does not mean that every article of furniture has to rest against the wall of the room, flat and straight. It means that many times the furniture had better so repose. For example, instead of placing the upright piano or the dresser across the corner of the room, find a place on the wall where it belongs and place it there, structurally, as if it were a part of the establishment. It then becomes a decorative feature.

Often a long table is best, as will appear in a later chapter, when its end touches the wall and its length projects into the room. On one side a divan may be placed, its back against the table. This conforms to the structural lines of the room, horizontal and vertical, and at the same time is perfectly practical.

Chairs—particularly straight-line chairs—when not against the wall may be placed parallel with tables, and grouped in such a way that their general structure lines are parallel with the original horizontal and vertical lines of the room. It is this matter of grouping wisely that makes a room effective so far as the form relations in the furniture are concerned.

This does not, by any means, imply that every article of furniture must be at right angles with the lines of the room and with each other. It means that the dominating furnishings of a room must be so related, or the principle of the room as a structural unit is violated. When this happens the foundation is laid for unrest,

pandemonium and an ultimate destruction of everything pleasant in the way of a decorative thought.

Chairs are often placed near other chairs or a divan, for purposes of conversation, or these are grouped near a light in order to make work possible as well as reading or writing. These deviations from structural unity are, however, made for a reason. It is because of some need that they exist and not because the arrangement is more "homey and cozy."

If everything is properly distributed on the floor it helps greatly in the treatment of the wall. The vertical lines of the wall when seen with the horizontal lines of the floor form a new problem of arrangement. The walls, too, are more nearly opposite the eye level when sitting or standing and, therefore, require even a stricter adherence to the principle of structural unity than does the floor.

Even if each article of furniture is properly placed, one must be careful to see that its contour or bounding lines do not create forms more erratic and likely to compel attention than do the objects themselves as a whole. If this is the case their bounding lines must be simplified somehow. Grills may be taken off, unpleasant carving removed. Expressionless curved bracketing, such as appears on piazzas, and much modern furniture should also be banished. In a room the objects themselves must be reduced to a consistent structural appearance before they can become in any sense a part of the wall.

A departure from this structural form if desired is easily made by using ornament, books, pottery, and other lesser forms of art expression upon articles of furniture or adjacent to them. The question of how many

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of these to use at a time and how many pictures, and what ones are appropriate will be considered in later chapters. Suffice it to say, now, that whatever is used should either be structurally in harmony with all the other objects, or there should be few enough articles non-structurally related to make it possible for one to grasp the feeling of the room and to remain content without a constant mental effort to fathom the mysteries of the maze into which he is thrust as he enters.

Perhaps the most flagrant abuse of the structural idea is the custom, so long prevalent, of hanging pictures by one wire, each end of which is attached to the frame, while both sides converge, at a point where the picture hook is attached to the moulding. Any line which is out of harmony with the structural idea of the unit should be so for purposes of emphasis. When any unusual line, unusual shape, or unusual direction is introduced it is for the purpose of calling attention to that line, shape or direction because of its beauty or its use. There can certainly be no other reason for calling attention to any particular thing in a room. Since the room will probably have no lines in harmony with the triangular one thus created, and since the picture hook is presumably less decorative than the picture itself (though this is not always true), there can be no reason why such a line should be introduced at the expense of the entire wall, to say nothing of the constructive value of the picture itself.

A single picture wire should be passed through two hooks about one inch from the top of the picture to be hung. This wire, passing through the two screw eyes, will leave the two ends free and the wire adjustable.

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Use two picture hooks, tying one to each end of the wire and hang the wires vertically. They will then be parallel with the edge of the frame, with the casings of the windows, doors and other structural features of the room. In this way even ugly picture wires almost escape notice. If they do not they should be toned to the general wall colour.

Window curtains very much draped create many lines out of harmony with the windows. This is the reason why under present conditions the best decorators are modifying considerably the period methods of hanging curtains, and using them straighter, with straighter valance and less erratic line combinations in the making.

This principle of structural unity must be applied to the selection and arrangement of every article, and violations of the idea may—after the meaning of the principle is thoroughly understood—be considered for reasons of emphasis; but study how, and why and where before introducing any unrelated forms in matters of decorative structural arrangement.

A second principle of form is that shapes and sizes should be consistent. Its analysis has to do with the selective element in form and size as well as the problem of arranging these selected forms in the most harmonious and agreeable manner possible.

The bounding edges of forms or shapes are lines. These lines are made always at the junction of two colour tones or are formed by one colour touching another. Wherever this occurs a line is created. Every time colour tones change for any reason whatever, a new shape is begun or the shape considered begins to change and a lined condition exists.



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Lines, as well as forms, are an important element in the consideration of composition. Good composition demands that these forms and lines should contain certain elements of likeness or harmony, and that they be so placed as to create this condition.

It is apparent then that too many colours, too much cut up in small areas, must result in the creation of too many shapes and lines. This tends to involve the problem in such a way that simplicity and repose in a room is well nigh impossible.

The kind of shapes and the direction of lines are as important as the number of them. Straight lines, which mark the shortest distance between two points, by their very nature seem simple, direct, forceful and somewhat structural. These qualities are the ones which the straight-line formation or construction should suggest, and where the feeling for them is not acute it is because lines of arrangement, as well as of pattern design, meet each other at obtuse and acute angles in such a way as to create a disagreeable feeling of opposition in line direction. Patterns in rugs and textiles often do this, as, in fact, the objects themselves are quite likely to do in the room arrangement in which the first principle of form—that is, consistent structural unity—is not conscientiously followed.

This effect of straight lines running in a slanting direction into other straight lines—excepting where the angles created are right angles—is ugly, non-structural and, consequently, usually uncomfortable in feeling.

Curved lines change their direction at every point. There are in general three classes of these lines, as follows:

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The arc of the circle changes its direction equally at every point. This is the most monotonous of curved lines, the simplest and most easily sensed. It lacks variety, and when used too frequently betrays lack of feeling for subtlety in line.

The arc of the ellipse, however, is more likely to change its direction at different points in the circumference, and presents a selective chance in line quite impossible in the arc of the circle. It is interesting, therefore, more subtle, and has greater æsthetic possibility.

The third class of curve is taken from the oval, and presents the greatest opportunity of all for fine relationships in variety of curve subtlety and in feeling for direction as well as for grace in line movement.

This curve of the oval appears in pottery and vase forms, in the general contour of ornament, and in other constructive curve-lined objects in the work of all nations where a fine æsthetic sense has been developed. The Greek, the Japanese, the High Renaissance in France, express their subtle relationships of curve in this type of line.

Mention of these three classes of curves is made here that one may become more sensitive to line as it appears in ornament and as it marks the boundary structural line of objects which are to be used as decorative motifs. The keener one's perception becomes in any field of expression the sooner will he realize the difference between the beautiful and the ugly, the æsthetic and the mechanical, the monotonous and the subtle. This perception is the key to the enjoyment of æsthetic relationships.

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Forms, as they are created by lines, may also be characterized as straight-lined and curve-lined forms. The wall surface, the floor and the ceiling are generally of the first type. Some articles of furniture, pieces of pottery, pictures, clocks and other ornament are of the second class, and not infrequently a curved line in the form of an alcove, a bay window or arched ceiling forms a secondary consideration in a straight-lined figure.

When forms have a likeness which is more apparent than their difference, they at once become harmonious. A square or rectangle is bounded by four straight lines with four right angles, the only difference being that the square has four equal sides while the oblong has two pairs of equal sides, each pair differing from the other.

An oblong in a vertical position, like the side of a room, which is taller than its length, or a blank wall space between windows or adjacent to a door opening with a height exceeding its width, furnishes an opportunity for experiment with related and unrelated shapes.

A picture, for example, taller than it is wide, is a vertical oblong. Place it at equal distances from each of the sides of your wall space and about opposite the eye level, and you will sense a likeness in the ratio of the sides of the picture to the sides of the oblong space in which it is placed. This is related, harmonious and comfortable, if its size is good, in the space upon which it appears.

In the same position place a square picture and the effect is a little less pleasing, unless adjacent to or

in some way related with it are other squares so that its distinctive form is not so apparent.

If one happens to have an elliptical picture and a round one, or even an elliptical vase, and a round clock, he should try each of these in the same position. He will see that the ellipse with a long vertical axis is more harmonious with the vertical space than if he should turn the ellipse so that the long axis would be horizontal. In that case one feels the opposition of the horizontal axis to the vertical line of the boundary space, and rebels against that structural motion, right and left, which is opposed to the vertical one of the wall space. This would be equally true, of course, of a horizontal oblong picture in the same space.

The circle, the most monotonous of curve-lined figures, whose circumference changes its direction at every point equally, has no quality in common with the vertical wall space. It is, therefore, quite unrelated to it as a decorative spot unassociated with other objects. If the wall space were exactly square, the round picture or clock would have the relationship of equal diameters and not be so inharmonious as in the vertical shape.

It is hard, however, to harmonize in any way a round clock, round picture, round medallion or other circular object upon the wall. If a round picture must be used, mat it with the most inconspicuous tone, relate this tone to the frame, and make both mat and frame square so that the environment of the picture may be in harmony with its background. The wall and the picture itself graduate the circle into the square by such stages of colour that the transition becomes almost, if not

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entirely, unobservable. The harder or more distinct the line transition, the less possibility of harmony in the result.

It is on the wall in particular that we must avoid these totally unrelated shapes. On a mantel, a cabinet, or a bureau such forms may appear. Not being fastened to the wall, and no attempt being made to have them seem to be a part of it, they become decorative as seen against it, because they are supported by and related to the thing upon which they stand, rather than to the wall itself.

The wall, then, is the background, not a part of the object which is seen decoratively against it. Its foundation or resting-place rather is the thing with which the object belongs.

A point might be made here in regard to the position of pictures and tapestries on the wall. Unless the tapestry is of sufficient size to nearly cover the wall, so that it seems to be a part of it, there should be some article of furniture or structural fact with which it may seem to group. This is even more essential in the case of pictures.

If a picture is hung so high that it seems to be unrelated to the cabinet, dresser, mantel, chair or other object, it immediately becomes a foreign object applied or nailed to a vertical surface. This is uncomfortable, and usually is not decorative, particularly if the picture is heavily framed. It should be hung low enough to be related to an article of furniture and to form some part of a group. The single isolated idea is always more or less uncomfortable and certainly unduly conspicuous in most instances.



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The contour of furniture is a subject properly related to the idea of consistent forms. It often occurs that both straight-lined and curve-lined furniture are essential to the spirit of a modern room.

In no period except that of Louis XV has a furniture construction been worked out in which every constructive line is a curve. In this period straight-lined structure was unknown and curved lines were brought to their highest possible state of efficiency as expressions of refined and artistic composition. A Louis XV chair, then, is totally unrelated in its form to the Louis XVI chair whose seat and back may be rectangular.

The period of Louis XVI frequently gives us chairs in which the seats are curved, the top of the back shows an arc of a circle or an ellipse, while the entire back is a curve-lined figure, although the legs are vertical and straight and the general feeling is one of an upright, rectangular object. There is an element of likeness between these last chairs described and the Louis XV, which under right conditions makes them harmonious and delightful together. If the perfectly straight-lined, rectangular Louis XVI chair is the only one in the room, the Louis XV chair can hardly be said to be closely enough related to be probable in such a combination.

The simplest expression is the one in which one type of form is not only dominant but preëminent. The early Italian Renaissance, with its formal, stately, upright chairs; with cabinets, every line of which is straight, vertical and horizontal; with spacing and arrangement in which vertical and horizontal line forms are the only ones used, while other articles of furniture are based upon the same plan, gives one a

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chance to see what is really the effect of a room in which only one general form is considered.

The same idea has been exploited in this country during the last twenty-five years under the name of the "Mission Style." This Mission Style is the return to the straight-lined structural construction by a people completely worn out and exhausted, having their vision bedimmed by the meaningless, erratic and in-artistic curves of the black-walnut period. In sheer self-defence they have intuitively grasped at the Mission idea, not because it is especially beautiful in proportion, practical or decorative in its effect, but because there must be some way to rid the country of the jig-saw bracketing of the modern wooden house. A maze of grill work had found its way into the interior, over doors, mantels, mirrors, etc., and it was necessary to eliminate the atrocities in curve-lined furniture, which factories were turning out under the impression that something original was being done.

The Mission Style has done its work and is passing, but it is worthy of special mention since it has called to the attention of this country the fact that simple related forms are essential to good taste in the expression of the interior of an ordinary house.

One must consider also in this connection the line formations due to ornament, abstract and otherwise, used decoratively in textiles and rugs. I have already called your attention to the impossible medallions of various shapes which occur too often in Oriental rugs. These forms are unrelated to the rug shape and to furniture shapes, and, in short, to everything with which they are associated. Because they are always

more or less ugly in themselves, they must either not appear at all or, if they do appear, must be so subdued that their outline is discerned with the greatest difficulty.

It sometimes happens that a round table must be used in a room. This is possible from the standpoint of function, in the dining-room, if over the table there is a decorative circular ceiling treatment, a circular chandelier—if chandeliers are used—or a curve-lined rug which may help to harmonize such a table with the straight-lined floor effect. In this case the colours chosen should be such that the transition in shape from table to floor will be less apparent because of the rug. If, however, the transition created is hard and apparent, then the rug pattern would better be of the floor shape since it gives no help in harmonizing unrelated forms.

It may not be necessary to mention that a square lunch cloth on a round table is less harmonious than a round one, or that a round one on a square table is less harmonious than a square cloth. There are many other interesting applications of this rule to every article that may be decoratively used, but the reader will find interest in detecting things for himself and correcting the wrong usages as fast as the right ones seem better to him than the wrong ones.

The second application of this principle, that which relates to consistent size, is more difficult to treat in a limited space. It has taken centuries for the Japanese to produce a national consciousness in which the feeling for the best and most subtle relationships in size is intuitive. The Greeks gave one thousand years of concentrated thought to finding the best way to develop

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ideal pure form, not only in the human figure, but in all phases of expression. This people, whose God was beauty, and whose beauty was truth in its highest form, presents, as no other people ever has, the tangible effects of a nation working unitedly for a common end—namely, the realization, intellectually, of pure form.

The Greek ideal brought out an art expression, particularly in architecture and ornament, whose essential principles have been fundamental in the development of all succeeding expression, except perhaps the Gothic, which is the result of an entirely different ideal. So effectually was their scheme of education planned from youth to old age, and so carefully was the religious, political and social fabric woven, that these people became imbued with the one idea of creating beauty, which was the expression of divinity in its noblest form. To create or use an ugly thing was impossible with this code of life. Because of the psychological result which followed such training, the subtleties in shape and size of parts expressing a whole are still the criterion for architects and constructional designers in all fields of expression involving the classic idea.

From buildings, architectural details, ornament, sculpture and the lesser crafts has come, quite consciously through the Renaissance, down to us the Greek relations in size which really furnished the key to their special excellence.

Greek art, unlike that of other nations, is not an emotional one in which forms, lines and colours excite the æsthetic sense without thought; every size, shape and arrangement is the product first of an intellectual calculation. That is what has made it possible to get at, some-

what scientifically, the relationships in size which made the Greek objects standards upon which other nations have based their ideas of proportion.

In the days of the High Renaissance in Italy Leonardo da Vinci and other great artists worked out, by measurements and by copy and by analytical and synthetical methods, certain statements of proportion which are helpful in modern times. One in particular has been known as the Golden Mean, the Greek Law, the Greek Deduction or the Ideal Proportion.

This, of course, is an abstract idea, and to abstract spacing applies in finding out interesting relationships. This statement of proportion originated in the ratio of the diameter of the top of the Doric or Ionic column to the diameter of its base, in the relative widths of spaces in the frieze of the Parthenon and other Greek temples, in the proportions of the various well-known ornaments, the vertical to the horizontal proportions, and even to the calculation of the proportions of the ideal human figure.

Exact divisions, like the half, third, fourth, eighth, etc., are mechanical, are easily measured in inches, and easily grasped by the mind. Having no subtlety they lack the one feature that stimulates the imagination and lends interest to the object.

The idea of variety, which is a consistent one, is fundamental in all artistic things. Training in schools or in business, which leads to a constant creation, in any field, of purely mechanical things, blunts and stunts the æsthetic perception, destroying the ability to enjoy subtle relationships.

The first point to note in this law is the fact that mechanical divisions are not artistic ones. That halves,



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thirds and fourths are mechanical ones, and therefore, monotonous, so that the habitual consideration of them must result ultimately in a loss of power to appreciate more subtle ones.

The second step in the evolution of the idea reveals that in the case of two objects, very unlike in size, each becomes more pronounced because of its association with the other. A very tall man seen with an exceedingly short one not only seems taller than he otherwise would, but by comparison makes the short man seem shorter than if he were seen by himself.

Wherever these great contrasts occur, the mind fails to make any comparison between the two objects, sees no relationship whatever, and fails to feel satisfied. If they are totally unrelated they cannot be a part of a unit or a whole. The applications of this idea are legion in the choice of articles for the furnishing of a house.

The third step is the perception of when it is that sizes or areas are nearly enough alike to be easily compared by the mind and sufficiently differing in size to be interesting because of their difference. This is the most vital point in the evolution of the idea.

If a vertical oblong, say four and one-half inches high and two and three-fourths inches wide, is drawn and divided exactly in the centre by a horizontal line, two areas are created which are monotonous, mechanical and uninteresting. On another oblong of the same proportion a horizontal line may be drawn five-eighths of an inch from the bottom. Two areas will be created which are incomparable, inconsistent, unlike in their direction and inartistic in their feeling. If a third ob-

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long be drawn and the exact centre of the right-hand edge found, so that the right-hand vertical line is divided into two equal parts, then this same line divided into thirds, we have a basis for a horizontal-line division which will result in subtle and interesting areas for comparison. Select a point somewhere between the half and third. It must not be a point exactly in the centre between the two, nor one which would divide the figure into thirds or quarters. The division must come at some uneven distance between the half and

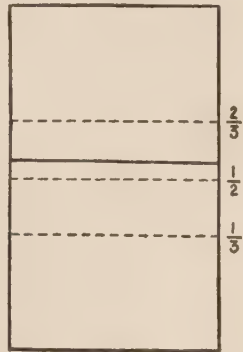
FIG. I



FIG. II



FIG. III



- I. Two areas equal and monotonous
- II. Two areas unrelated and incomparable
- III. Two areas subtle, comparable and interesting

third. Then draw a horizontal line dividing this oblong into two areas which are not equal, but which are so related as to seem comparable when seen together.

These area divisions may be used in many ways in designing façades of buildings, in the interior panelling of houses, and parts of doors and windows. They should be considered also with reference to the relations of these to each other, to furniture and its proportions and

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to decorative motifs as they are used upon any furniture or textile.

The Greek law of areas or lines may be approximately stated in these words: "Two areas or lines are comparable, interesting, subtle and desirable when one of them is between one-half and two-thirds the area or length of the other."

Any one interested in seeing the application of this idea to concrete things will find plenty of opportunity for comment and disapproval in the relation of windows to wall space when function would admit of a different arrangement; in the placing of plate rails in a room; in the widths and positions of dadoes; in the bands of rugs; in rugs as they relate to floor space; in panels on cabinets, chests and other articles of furniture; in motifs whose parts are totally unrelated because of badly chosen sizes; in dishes, in lamp bases with their shades, and other articles in every room in which the owner has never given a thought to subtle relationships. If more than two sizes are compared a ratio may be established between the smaller of the first two compared and a third size which is to be used.

One of the most pleasing and simple applications of this rule is seen in a well-margined book page where the law of optics requires the widest margin at the bottom, the next at the outside, and narrower ones at the top and inside, thus presenting four well-related sizes in a field in which every one is interested and where the most uncultivated can see the result and sense its correct application.

We might extend the discussion to the relation of the size of the table cover to the table top, the position of

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the band to the edge of the china plate, or to any other lesser matters, but for the further application of this principle it may be well to allow the reader to extend his application as far as he can, in the hope of discovering new possibilities in realms not mentioned in the text.

## PART I

## CHAPTER III

### BALANCE AND MOVEMENT

SPEAKING from the standpoint of appearance as it expresses rest, repose or artistic skill, no one term means so much as the word balance. In fact, the arrangement of colour tones, forms and lines in a perfectly balanced scheme will always result in the appearance of just these qualities named. It is difficult at first to appreciate how important this element is in room arrangement.

The term balance means a perfect equalization of attractions, whatever the attractions may be, if they make an appeal through the sense which transmits them to the mind. The feeling for this quality is an instinct, inherent because man is a part of a created whole in which there are general laws touching every element of the universe.

The law of gravitation plays a certain part in optical effects, and this attracting force, pulling all matter in a given direction, is one of the influences that affects the nature of man. This term attraction applied to the sense of sight is balance. Where a perfect balance exists one experiences unconsciously a feeling of satisfaction which comes from a sense of rest and repose through finished action.

Balance, then, may briefly be defined as that principle by which an equalization of attractions is obtained, or





DECORATIVE TREATMENT EXPRESSING SIMPLICITY, DIGNITY, FORMALITY AND ELEGANCE. BISYMMETRIC ARRANGEMENT (SIMILAR OBJECTS AT SIMILAR DISTANCES FROM THE VERTICAL CENTER) ACCENTUATES THESE FEELINGS. NOTICE THE CHARM PRODUCED BY CIRCULAR DECORATIVE MEDALLIONS; THEIR LINE BEING REPEATED IN THE VASES, CEILING, BENCHES, ETC.



by which a sense of rest, repose or finished movement is produced. The feeling resulting from balanced conditions has in it the quality of rest and satisfaction because nothing further having a sense appeal of attraction is presented to the mind.

There are two types of balance which may be described.

The first type of balance is known as bisymmetric. If a side wall entirely covered with one-tone wall paper has a vertical line drawn through its centre from top to bottom, this vertical line may be said to be the balancing point for all objects right and left of this line in relation to the wall space. So long as the wall is covered with one tone, no other thing appearing upon it or against it, it is in a balanced condition. That is, there is nothing on one side which makes a stronger appeal for attention than there is on the other. If one but drives a nail at the right of the line, and centres vision on the balancing line, he is at once invited by the presence of the nail to transfer his attention from the line to the nail.

If this nail becomes a picture, an ornament, an object of furniture or a person standing against or adjacent to the wall, the desire to give attention in that direction is increased proportionately to the attractive qualities of the object under consideration.

Returning to the first statement, in which a nail is placed at the right of the centre line: I shall restore the equilibrium and again find my wall balanced if I drive a nail of the same size, shape and colour exactly as far to the left of the centre line as the first one was to the right of the same line.

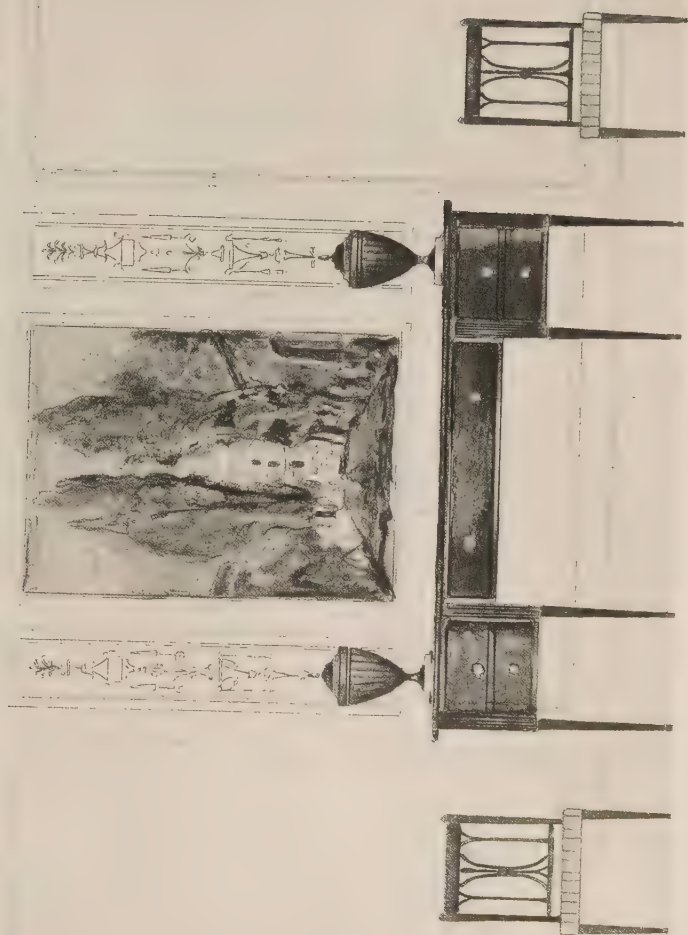
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If my purpose in driving these nails is to arrange upon the wall two pictures, I find in placing one at the right I have again, notwithstanding my nail, completely unbalanced the wall; that is, there is something on the right that by its shape, size, colour, position and human appeal bids me look, become interested, and remain attentive.

Again, because I have placed a material thing on the right of this line, I have also added more matter to be unconsciously attracted by gravitation to the right side than I have to the left. This again, from another standpoint, unbalances the wall and makes the right side seem heavier or more drawn down than the left. If I wish to restore balance I must place on the second nail at the left a picture exactly equal in attraction to the one placed on the right, bearing in mind, of course, that each nail is as far from the centre line as the other.

The reason for starting with the nail is not, of course, on the supposition that a nail is to become a part of the decorative scheme, but to lead the mind to see that even the nail, should it be left without a picture, or the hole in the wall made by the nail if not properly covered, becomes an attracting force, which may ultimately figure in the destruction of balance on the wall.

This centre line on a wall space is an important thing to reckon with in all cases before attempting to balance the wall. If the wall were again cleared and I should decide to put two chairs exactly alike, each equidistant from the centre line, I should have a balance. If a cabinet be placed on the line so that exactly half falls to the right and half to the left; two chairs,



ELEVATION COLOR SKETCH OF DINING-ROOM WHICH ILLUSTRATES SUBTLE RELATIONSHIPS IN WALL SPACING ALSO PRODUCES THE QUALITIES OF SIMPLICITY, DIGNITY AND REST THROUGH A BISYMMETRIC ARRANGEMENT OF FURNISHINGS.





exactly alike, one on each side of the cabinet, equidistant from the centre line and equidistant from the cornice upon the cabinet; a row of three pictures, half on either side the vertical line; at the ends of the cabinet two tall candlesticks, both alike and equidistant from the centre; in the centre of the cabinet a well-chosen decorative jar or piece of pottery, the wall will balance, having equal attractions in size, shape, colour and texture on each side of the vertical line. This type of balance is known as bisymmetric.

The natural feeling one experiences from this type of balance is one of dignity and formality first. The very fact that one sees on each side of the centre exactly the same forms, colours and textures, makes the mental grasp of the situation easier, and consequently, in the simplest possible way, with the least mental effort, produces the effect of dignity and formal arrangement.

Repose is a second feeling which must come without conscious effort. This is perhaps in part because of the analogy between the arrangement and the law of gravitation, as it may be seen in the use of the ordinary weighing scales. When both pans of the weighing scales are empty the bar is horizontal and the scales are at rest. Throw into the scale a cube of iron weighing one pound, and the scales are in motion, a diagonal position is created and rest is destroyed. Put into the other pan an iron cube of equal weight and size, and the weighing bar becomes again horizontal and the feeling of formal and dignified position returns, while the mental sensation of harmony with the law of gravitation is a natural sequence.

The side wall arrangement described works in pre-

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cisely the same manner. Because of our associations with things in these relative positions they produce the sensations described. We are at once more or less affected, according to our sensitiveness, by such an arrangement, and more or less require this form to produce the desired result.

There are so many applications of this bisymmetric arrangement in all phases of expression that no exhaustive treatment of them can be made. It may be suggested, however, that one's appreciation of the bisymmetric balance may be cultivated by searching the façades of buildings and their gable ends for the perfect bisymmetric arrangement. One may also arrange mantels or bureau and dresser tops in bisymmetric form, placing furniture and decorative objects simply in these positions, creating vertical centre lines on which they may appear as balanced attractions.

It will be seen in all applications of the principle that this, the simplest arrangement, requires the least subtle treatment, is a matter of intelligence rather than imagination, that it is formal enough for any condition and restful enough for any scheme. It is the easiest way out of ordinary problems of unrest in arrangement.

It must be admitted, however, that the constant use of bisymmetric treatment may result in a stiff effect and be a bit too formal, since it is rather monotonous and lacks in some ways the large imaginative opportunity of the more involved arrangement.

The second kind of balance is known as the occult balance. This means simply a balance which is *felt* rather than one methodically or scientifically deter-

mined. The occult balance may, it is true, be proven to be a balanced arrangement if one knows how to estimate the attractive force of the elements used in the scheme. It is, however, in general, a matter of æsthetic sense, acute feeling, or feeling and judgment combined, which is a matter of psychologic conclusion rather than of a material calculation.

With the Japanese the sense for occult balance as a national asset has been so strongly cultivated by education and environment that their compositions, whether in books, vases of flowers, architectural or detail arrangements, unconsciously present the most subtle and charming occult balance known to modern life.

Those who are sufficiently familiar with the period of Louis XV to understand the arrangement of ornament used in wall panels, or the application of this ornament to articles of furniture following the same structural lines, will perceive the same refined sense for occult arrangement in which there is a feeling of perfect balance on either side the vertical line. In no case is there a bisymmetric arrangement where forms, sizes, colours and textures are unlike on either side this balance line.

There are many other interesting national expressions in which the occult arrangement is the only one evolved through highly organized artistic skill in composition.

If the problem of a single wall arrangement is one of occult balance and one has the same cabinet, two chairs, two candlesticks and two or three pictures to place upon the wall, and must use them all while he may

## INTERIOR DECORATION

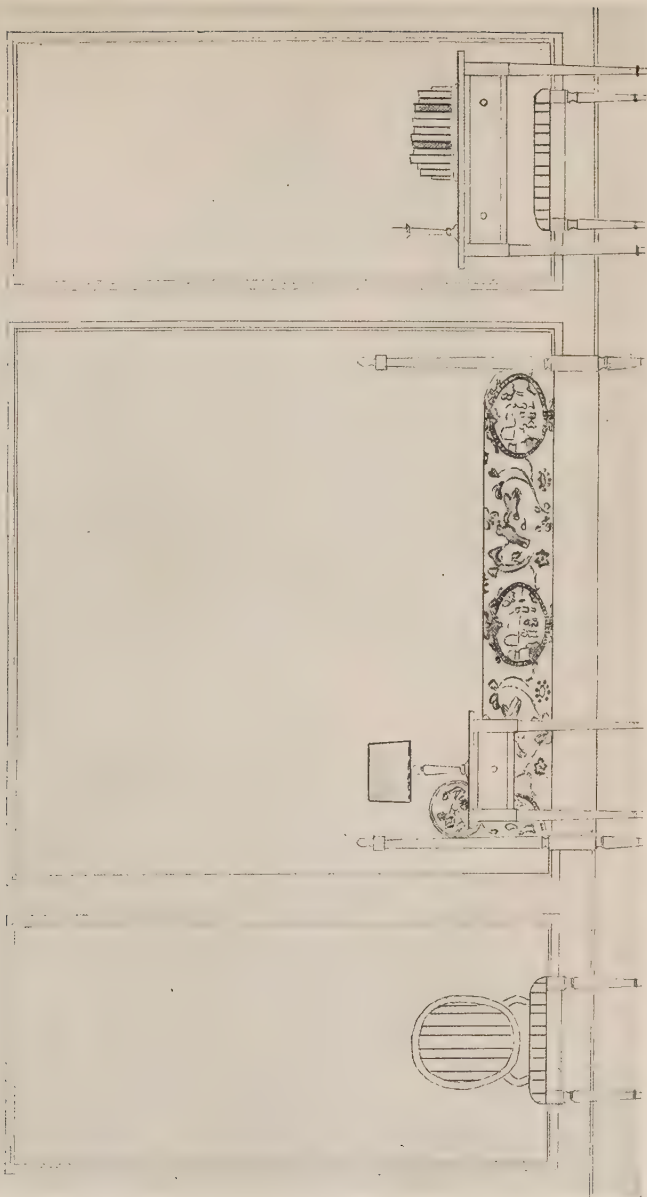
not use anything else, his problem becomes one of equalizing these attractions on either side the same vertical line. Naturally the cabinet will not balance one chair—perhaps not two. As soon as the cabinet is increased in attractiveness by two candlesticks, it is less apt to balance two chairs, or one, all other things being equal. The pictures evidently must be so arranged as to assist in this equalization of attractions, or else the other walls of the room must be taken into consideration with this one, and the problem become more involved.

For people who are not thoroughly practised, and not sure when a balance is perfectly arranged, nothing is more helpful when arranging side walls and single surfaces than to return to the weighing scale.

In the old-fashioned steelyard there is a chance to illustrate the occult balance idea. The horizontal bar, with its movable weight from right to left, forms a lever, with the fulcrum at the point where a hook is fastened, to which articles of various gravity are adjusted for weighing purposes. An iron weight is moved right and left along this bar until it exactly balances an object which is hung on the aforesaid hook. The heavier the package attached to the hook, the farther away from the fulcrum point the iron weight is moved. This weight increases in distance from the central balancing line as the attractive power of the parcel attached to the hook increases.

Another familiar illustration of this idea in the law of gravitation is seen in the see-saw board. If a board, alike throughout its length, is placed across a fence as a fulcrum point, so that just half of it is on





ELEVATION SKETCH FOR YOUNG GIRL'S BEDROOM, EXPRESSING QUALITIES OF SUBTLETY, GRACE, YOUTH AND CHARM THROUGH AN OCCULT ARRANGEMENT OF FURNISHINGS. OCCULT ARRANGEMENT IS AN ARRANGEMENT WHERE A BALANCE IS OBTAINED THROUGH FEELING



## BALANCE AND MOVEMENT

each side the fence, it rests in a horizontal position and is balanced. If I place a twenty-five-pound boy on one, and fail to adjust the boy or to place a weight upon the other end, the board at once loses its balanced effect and one end is thrown to the ground. If, on the other hand, I place at the same time a twenty-five-pound boy on each end, my board remains in perfect equilibrium as truly as if nothing were placed upon the board at all.

My problem becomes complicated when I have a boy weighing fifty pounds and one that weighs twenty-five pounds to be placed upon this board, and still I desire the board to remain in a horizontal position and at rest. If I move the board so that there is twice as much length or distance on one side the fence as on the other, and place the boy weighing fifty pounds on the shorter end, and the one weighing twenty-five pounds on the longer end, I shall find my board resumes its normal rest position and will so remain.

From these two illustrations three very important statements are derived.

First. Equal attractions balance each other at an equal distance from the centre.

Second. Unequal attractions balance each other at unequal distances from the centre.

Third. Unequal attractions balance each other at distances which are in inverse ratio to their power of attraction.

Applied to the side wall, this means that the stronger the object is in its power to attract, the more it tends to gravitate toward the centre or balancing line; the less attractive the object, the more it tends to recede

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from the centre; that two objects, one of which is much more attractive than the other, to balance on a single wall must be so placed that the more attractive of the two is nearer the centre than the less attractive one, and the less attractive is nearer the corner than the more attractive one, the exact difference apart depending upon the attractive power. This establishes a balance, as has been shown in the case of the use of two boys of unequal weight and the see-saw board across the fence.

The wall problem usually involves more than two objects and sometimes many. One must begin by placing the largest, strongest or most attractive nearest the centre; then the next, the next, and the next, back and forth from one side to the other of the central line, until a feeling of rest or equal attraction on either side is obtained. This arrangement, when it has reached a balanced condition, is the occult balance so often seen and so little understood.

In furnishing a room, however, one side wall is but a small part of the entire problem, and were one to take each side wall separately there would be the problem of putting the four walls together so that the entire room is a balance as well as each separate wall.

The central axis of the room is the place in which to stand when judging the balanced arrangement. If I face north and my north wall is well balanced, I turn to the northwest corner, and must feel a balance between the north wall and west wall as a whole; turn to the northeast corner, the same feeling of rest should obtain as between north and east walls. If this is right, the west wall and the east wall will also balance. The

same process, facing south, will show at once whether the room is well balanced or not.

By well balanced, I do not mean the wall or the things that are a part of it or are attached to it, but those things in the room, whether they touch the wall or not, that seem to use that wall naturally as a background.

Sometimes a small picture hung over an article of furniture or a very dark contrasting value in some material, although in small quantity, will restore the balance where the opposite wall has a larger picture over a cabinet or piano, or where a tapestry gives a wall sufficient strength to demand a strong opposite attractive force. This prevents a feeling of tipping in the room.

Some of the very bad arrangement of pianos, especially black ones, across room corners, and the adjustment of bureaus, dressers and cabinets in the same diagonal positions are attempts to restore a balanced arrangement in the room and to connect one wall with the other. This linking by an unnatural line of one wall to the other does not as a rule restore the balance but it does destroy the structural effect of the room, creating another motif entirely foreign to the original idea, and it often makes the grouping of other articles of furniture quite impossible.



## PART I

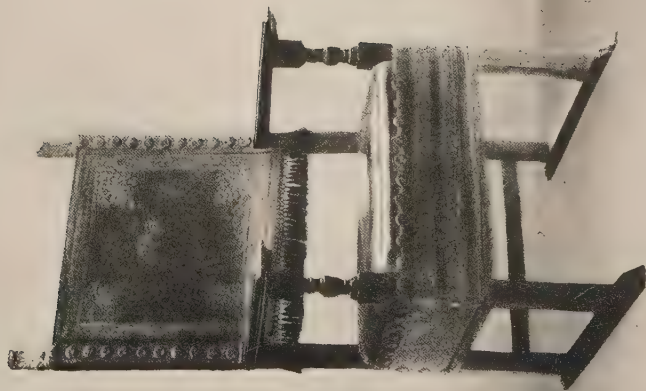
## CHAPTER IV

### EMPHASIS AND UNITY

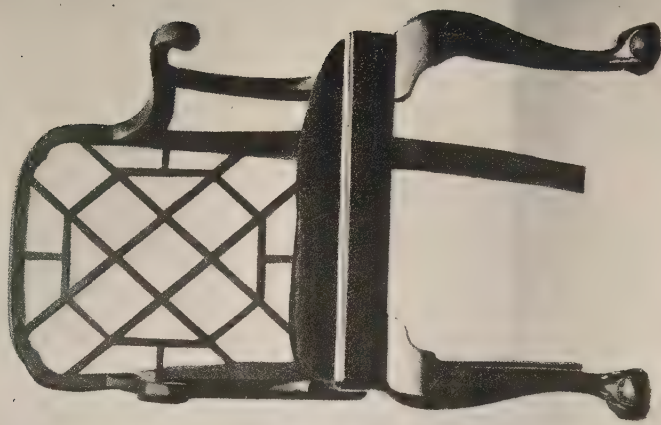
PURPOSELY up to this time no special stress has been laid upon those qualities in objects which furnish the power of attraction previously mentioned. There are several elements which in themselves attract the eye under ordinary conditions. There is probably no doubt that colour is the most attractive of all forces to the eye because colour is the only thing the eye sees—forms and lines being the result of colour transition and mental comparison.

Colour may be used as an attractive force in three fields, that of hue, value and intensity, and should be balanced accordingly. If one colour presents with its background a very strong contrast in intensity, this appeal may be balanced with another object which is a stronger contrast in value.

As has been shown in the chapters on colour, one estimates, consciously or unconsciously, the attractive power of a colour tone in each of the three fields, hue, value and intensity, and the more one studies a balanced relation of these qualities under varying conditions, the finer becomes his sense of discrimination, and the sooner will the feeling for balance become a habit. Until it does become a habit the pleasure resulting from balanced relationship cannot be felt



AN ITALIAN CHAIR WHOSE LINES CREATE AN OP-  
POSITION IN MOVEMENT, RESULTING IN A CLEAN  
CUT, DIGNIFIED, FORMAL STRUCTURE, WHOSE PRO-  
PORTION IS ITS CHARM.



A CHINESE CHIPPENDALE CHAIR WITH MIXED LINE  
ARRANGEMENTS, CREATING AN OPPOSITION IN THE  
BACK, DISTRACTING AND UGLY, AND RESULTING  
IN PROPORTIONS IRRECONCILABLE.



by the individual, for the final test of æsthetic appeal is in the power of significant colour combination or of form to stimulate the activity of the æsthetic sense.

When objects are to appear as decorative features in colour upon a cabinet, bookcase, shelf or table, there is abundant chance for arranging two, three or five objects differing in colour, size and form. If there are five objects there is a single one, with two on either side, arranged in such a way that there is a perfect feeling of rest in the arrangement. No finer training is possible than the arranging of such groups.

If the objects differ considerably in colour, perhaps in hue and intensity, the problem is still more interesting. If there is also great variation in value the problem is too involved to grasp easily.

Two of the three qualities of colour make sufficient contrast between objects that are to be considered as parts of a unit, and even these two should not under general conditions be too violently contrasted. It is a good thing to cultivate the habit of seeing subtle relationships and allowing subtle relationships to do the work under ordinary circumstances. Never use violent contrasts in any of the colour qualities except as understood emphasis necessities, or as consciously felt stimuli to the colour sense.

A judicious use of colour is essential, as a judicious use of anything else is essential, to its fullest usefulness. An orgy of colour, like an orgy of other natural qualities, unfits one to appreciate its force and exhausts that force in unnecessary activity.

Contrasted shapes must be balanced. A round form appearing against an oblong wall makes a stronger bid

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for attention than an oblong form of exactly the same area and exactly the same colour as the circular one. Some power of attraction added to shape must be given the oblong form before it can make as strong an appeal as the circular one or become a balance for it.

In sensing an occult balance this must be considered as well as relative sizes. All other things being equal, objects of the same size present the same attractive power. Sometimes, however, a small object, brilliant or intense in colour, may be balanced by a much larger one less intense in colour, when other attractive forces are the same in each.

Texture, too, has a special attraction interest. When the wall is of a soft, flat, smooth texture, and two pieces of pottery are to appear on it, one having almost exactly the same feeling in texture as the wall and the other contrasted by being much coarser, heavier, rougher and more porous in appearance, even if size, shape and colour are identical, the contrasted texture gives one a stronger force appeal than the other. This quality of textural difference is a matter for consideration later, but one that seriously enters into the perfect feeling for balanced arrangement.

The principle known as movement is, in composition or design, the opposite of balance and destroys the idea which balance creates.

When the human figure stands erect—ears, shoulders, hips and heels in the same vertical line—it is in harmony with the law of gravitation and is at rest. No effort is required to stand erect when one is in this position. The law of gravitation does the work. If the body is laid flat upon the floor the same law, acting on the floor,



the body and the rest of the universe, makes action or effort on the part of man unnecessary. Stand and incline the body forward by throwing the left leg out as if to run, and the body assumes a position in which there is the appearance of its being about to perform some act requiring motion. If it were to tip back of the vertical line the same feeling would be created, and an effort be required in order to remain in this position. The figure thus posed is said to be in action.

When an inclined or oblique line appears in composition with vertical and horizontal ones, the same feeling of action or motion is expressed. This is because it is out of line with gravitation and out of line with the structural ideas with which it is in composition.

Hang upon the wall at the left side a definitely vertical striped wall paper or textile, hang at the other end of the room a textile in which there is a definitely curved line extending from top to bottom, either in the form of the Italian or Louis XIV decorative motif, or of a vine arrangement such as may be found in the textiles of the Jacobean period or some modern wall papers. Look at the first illustration about halfway from the floor to the ceiling. The eye naturally tends at once to follow the vertical stripe to the ceiling; the tendency is next to follow it down to the floor. The eye naturally moves up and down in a straight line because it is one that extends unbroken in a certain direction. Partly because of the structural idea and partly by reason of innate human curiosity, the eye will travel to the end of this line.

If you look at the second illustration, you will find it impossible for the eye to make a straight line from

## INTERIOR DECORATION

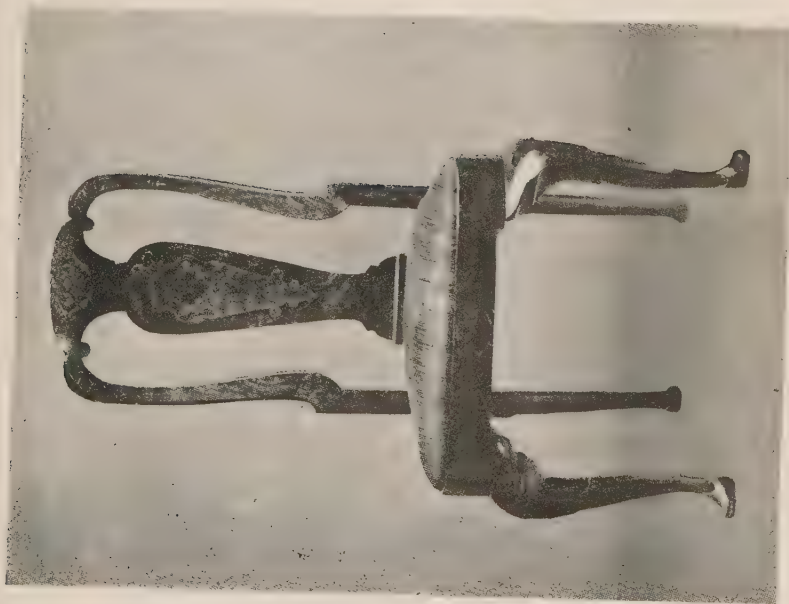
the centre of the room to the top, or the bottom of the room to the top. The eye tends to follow the direction of the strongest line, the curved one which I have described.

This tendency by which the eye is led from one point to another by a continuous line, or one nearly so, is called movement, and this movement from one place to another, in this or that direction, consciously or unconsciously, detracts from the sense of rest or repose. If the function of the room is to secure repose, neither of these movements will be introduced in strong and vigorous effects without destroying the idea for which the room exists.

If dignity and formality are the chief characteristics of the room, the wandering curve will tend to make it less so than if the movement were a strictly vertical and horizontal one.

The lines of triangular picture wires, erratic lines created by draperies, oblique placing of rugs with reference to floor edges and other arrangements which have been treated under structural unity, create, each in itself, a movement contrary to the general one established by the room structure. Each movement in a direction different from that of all the others creates a maze or forest of direction movements. This results in confusing the selection, and a solution, conscious or unconscious, of the composition idea becomes impossible. Such a room is not one in which to rest.

It is not lines alone that create movement; spots of colour or arrangements of forms, close enough together to be associated as parts of a whole, lead the eye from



A. RHYTHMIC LINE MOVEMENT (LINES FLOWING GRACEFULLY IN THE SAME DIRECTION) FOUND IN CONTOUR OF CHAIR THROUGHOUT. THIS ADDS A CERTAIN GRACE AND EASE TO THE OBJECT.



B. TEXTILE ILLUSTRATING RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT THROUGHOUT THE PATTERN. NO LINES FOUND WHICH OPPOSE EACH OTHER.



one point to another through a sequence in the same way.

In some designs which are to be used for decorative purposes movement is most desirable, for, in the fact that the eye does naturally go from one part of the design to the other, there is an incentive to interest throughout the entire scheme.

When the opposite idea, however, is the aim, care must be taken that no such movement be created. For example, many people fancy that, given three or four small pictures, they must be hung together or adjacent to each other as a group upon the wall; that if each picture is, for example, nine inches high, the first one at the left should be placed low, the next one four inches away from it and two inches higher, the next four inches from that and two inches higher, and the last one in the same way, at a distance of four inches, and two inches higher. They believe that an artistic result must be obtained because this arrangement surely is not stiff. No, it is not stiff; neither is it desirable from any standpoint.

Structurally these pictures should be straight across the top. The reason for this will be given later. If they are of the same size there is no excuse for their not being straight at the top or bottom. If any motion is to be created across the room from right to left, it should be straight across rather than up and down stairs, which would be tiresome if taken far. The same objectionable movement often results from arranging furniture after this manner.

Another place where it is undesirable to create endless journeys is upon the floor. I have remarked be-



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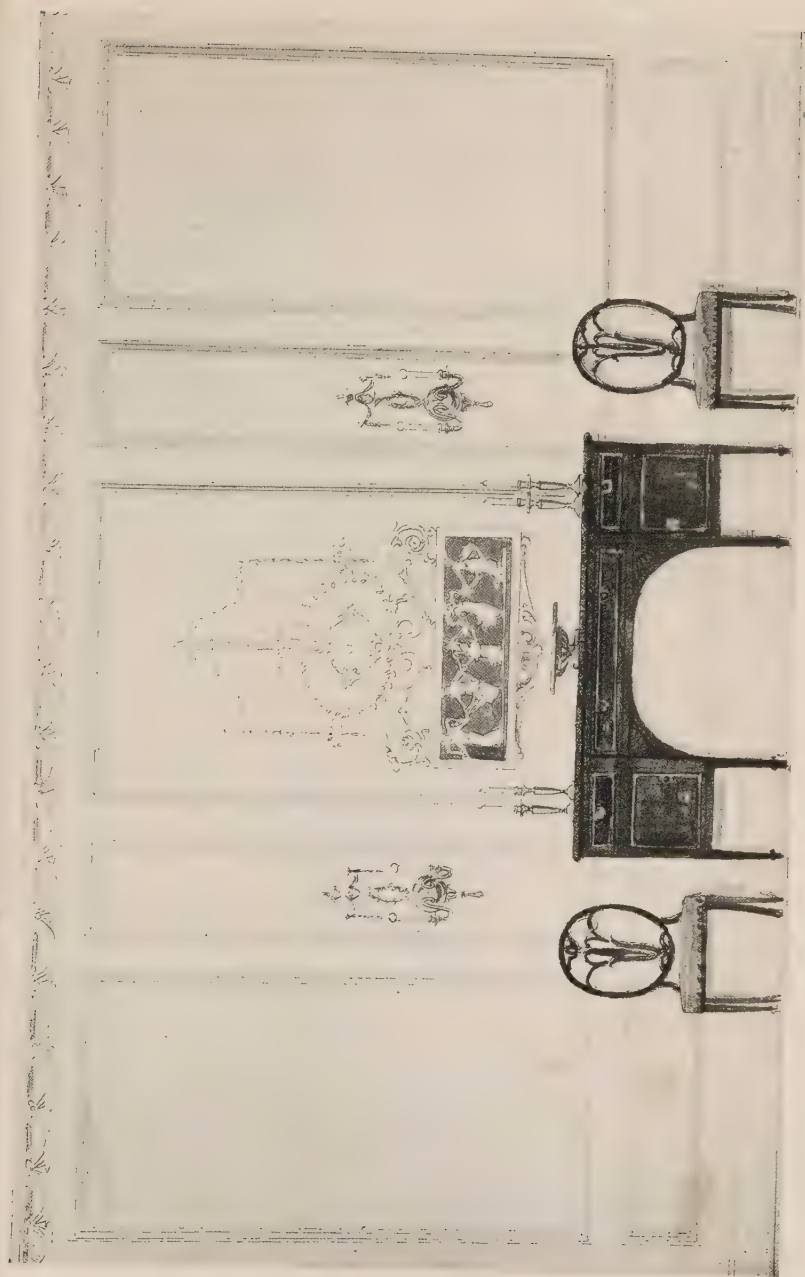
fore that the quieter the floor appearance is the more it accords with the idea of a place on which the feet may rest and furniture may be placed.

One of the most disturbing things to be found in a room is a rug the pattern of which, by its erratic lines or spotted effects, leads the eye horizontally, vertically and diagonally all at the same time. This type of design is much worse when it appears in spotted wall covers. For instance, in the case of bouquets of flowers placed several feet apart, one above the other, showing as clearly defined spots that form a sequence which may be followed in any direction, each spot leading to an adjacent one in the same line.

No one ever suspected until his attention was called to it, probably through experience, the amount of energy wasted by the American nation in useless counting, consciously and unconsciously, of spotted wall papers, spotted floors and badly arranged decorative motifs on the wall.

The fact to grasp is that these arrangements exist to produce certain results, and movement prevents balanced arrangement and the resultant quiet, restful effect of finished motion. If the mistake is made of allowing this movement idea to creep in in ever so small a way, it must, inasmuch as it has entered into a scheme, bring with it the qualities for which it stands. Understand this, and introduce the opposite of those qualities, if they are desirable, in the particular room under consideration.

It may be interesting to those who find pleasure in the study of pictures to know that this is one of the most useful of all principles of composition to him who



SIDE WALL ELEVATION IN COLOR, WITH EXCELLENT BACKGROUND SPACINGS AND INTENSELY INTERESTING DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT THROUGH THE USE OF CURVED AND RHYTHMIC LINES.



would use the accessory objects in his pictures to emphasize the centre of interest or the key idea for which the picture stands.

Take, for example, many of the religious pictures of early Italian art. Some of them contain from three to one hundred figures, including perhaps the mother, the child, and the rest of the Holy Family, saints, angels and other persons. The function of each of these figures as a matter of composition is to emphasize some precept or ideal for which the picture stands as a whole. We will suppose, for the sake of argument, that the Christ idea is to be brought out or the child Christ idea is to be emphasized. The child is small, not brilliantly coloured, and lies quietly in the mother's arms. The bend of the head, the gaze of the eyes, compel the observer of the picture to find interest in the very thing in which the mother is most interested. Other members of the family, saints and attendants, are generally interested and looking directly at or bending their body toward either mother or child. If they are not, one is looking at another and either pointing to the object of most importance or, by looking at another who is absorbed in contemplation of this object, compels you to follow his gaze.

This setting of composition, arranging of forms, comparison of lines and use of gaze attraction is emphasized always in the best stage performances in which more than one or two persons are concerned in the exposition of an idea.

Every principle of composition and arrangement exists to make clear some given quality or idea. These principles also assist in producing a corresponding

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mental state in any person who is active in sensing such qualities. Conformity to these principles will result in producing qualities related to the idea for which an expression is sought. Disregard of them may have a result quite opposed to those ideas which may be struggling for expression.

Movement, then, is the complement of balance. Balance exists to produce rest and all those qualities which are intimately related to it. Movement exists to destroy balance, to create unrest, to lead the individual in certain directions from one thing to another to keep him on the alert, and it ends by bringing him to some particular point.

Let us not confuse these two vital principles or fail to see their import in the arrangement of colours, forms, lines and textures in any problem where the decorative idea is the one to be considered.



## PART I

## CHAPTER V

### SCALE, MOTIFS AND TEXTURES AS THEY RELATE TO FURNISHING AND DECORATING

MENTION has been made of the effects produced in decorative units where the scale or relative sizes of its elements are well or badly chosen. A more detailed treatment of this subject is not likely to make us too careful in our selections in this field of expression.

The term scale is broader in its meaning than the mere word implies. It means not only that every element of each separate article must be in the right proportion to every other element of that article, but that every object used in the room unit must have the same perfect scale relation to every other object used and to the room itself.

Furthermore, this scale feeling extends not only to the appearance or to the forms, sizes and colours in their æsthetic effects, but also to these as each expresses its particular function idea.

Examine the treatment as it is applied to a chair, for instance. First, this given chair must have general proportions which are both pleasing and possible in its functional capacity. The proportion of height to width, and of each of these to the depth of the chair as a whole, must be considered. The dimensions of the back, of the seat, the height of the seat from the floor,

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the design of the arms, if there be any arms, must be so related that the chair will fulfill its functional idea of comfort. Then all of its parts by their perfect scale relation, each to each, will awaken through their significant forms a sense of æsthetic pleasure.

The proportion, too, of the legs to the cross bars of the chair; of the members of the back to those parts and to each other; the mouldings (if there are any) to all these and to each other should be a subject for careful individual study no matter how small the detail may be. American furniture shows a woful lack of knowledge of such details, a lack of sincerity in expressing an idea and a neglect of æsthetic proportion.

If the chair is perfectly suited by its proportion and its forms to the idea for which it stands, and if these form relations are so pleasing by comparison that an æsthetic sensation is produced, the chair has fulfilled the law, so far as its scale relation is concerned, as a separate unit. But this is not the final tribunal before which this particular chair comes in composition with other chairs and other articles of furniture making up the room unit.

If the chair under discussion is to be covered with upholstery material and this material has decorative units of ornament upon its surface, these also must show a scale feeling. These have the same artistic relationship as that which exists between other members of the same general whole. Very often a chair with slim, delicate, refined legs will be found in historic periods with backs far too heavy, or vice versa, and while the chair is perhaps an expression of some stage of development during the period, it is an ugly aggre-

gate of scale relationships and an inartistic model for present-day use. Sometimes when these parts are well related in scale the period demanded a textile the design of which was far too heavy, or perhaps too weak, for the structural scale elements of the chair.

There is a question, then, of choosing between bad forms, bad sizes, and poorly related scales as the expression of some period when these forms were not clearly sensed, or of so relating these parts in scale that they shall represent not only their functional idea but also an æsthetic scale relationship. There can be no question as to which to choose. The slavish acceptance or copy of a period article of furniture or decoration, bad in any part, but copied because of its period significance, bespeaks bad taste. It shows also a bad tendency on the part of the person who prefers to copy and hold intact badly expressed ideas, rather than to try to grasp the idea, modifying and improving it as much as he is able to under particular circumstances.

It should be made quite clear at this point that there are no periods in which one cannot find, and find often, the grossest inconsistencies in some phase of national expression. At no period and at no time have people succeeded in keeping a perfect balance of ideas; therefore, in no period have they made a perfect balance in expressing those ideas.

Sometimes, as in the High Greek period, proportion has been fundamental in all things and appears in its most highly developed form. At other times rhythm and grace of line have been the dominant thought, and dancing, waving-line combinations have been carried to their greatest degree of perfection. This occurred in

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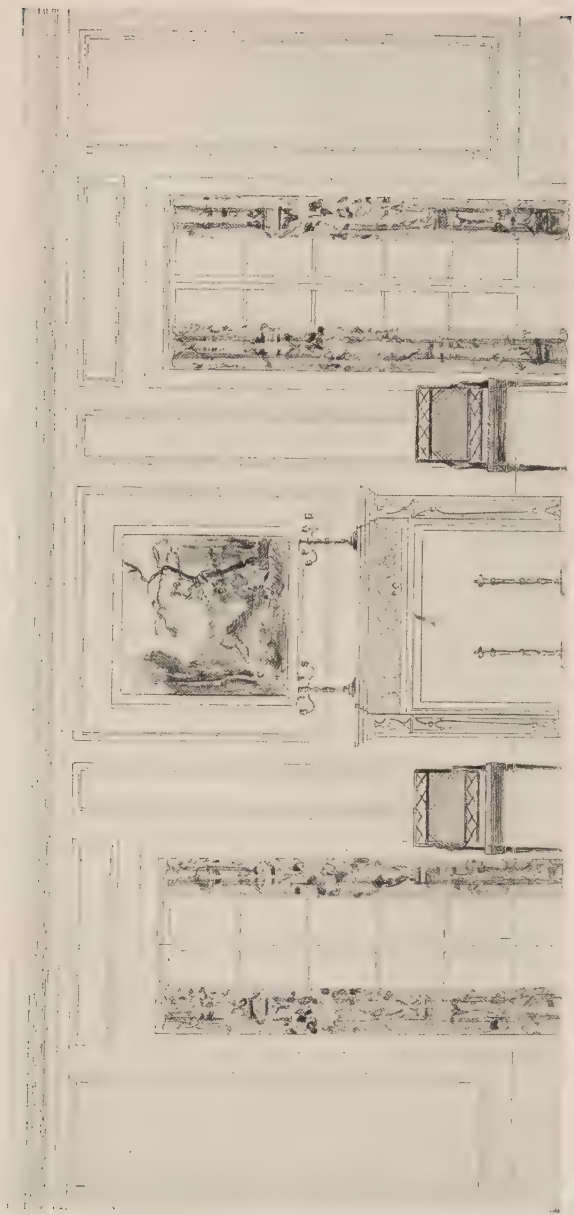
the period of Louis XIV, when proportion and scale relations between rooms and their furnishings were often totally ignored in the matter of assembling objects as a room unit.

A single chair sometimes carried out in every particular the scale idea, but it was placed in a room in which the scale relation was absolutely unsensed and at times it was associated with articles of furniture having the same defect. Then, too, it frequently occurred that naturalistic decorative motifs were woven in the tapestry covering the seats of a Louis XV chair, decorations large enough in motif and strong enough in colour to have dominated a huge formal chair of the period of the High Renaissance in Italy.

The reason for studying scale from period standpoints is to establish the fact that certain scale relations are consistent and harmonious, and therefore pleasing, and that a violation of these scale relations is bound to destroy the consistency, the harmony and the pleasure resulting from scale as an artistic consideration.

One is quite likely to come across badly related things in the most ordinary furnishings of the most ordinary houses as well as in the most elaborate ones where periods and types are more thoughtlessly mixed.

A table generally has a larger leg than a chair, but the ratio of size between the leg and the chair should have a bearing on the general size of the table as it relates to the general size of the chair; or, rather, the general contour, size and thickness of material in any article of furniture establishes a relationship between its dimensions as a whole and the dimensions of its parts, such as its legs, its top, its slats or its panels.



SIMPLE SIDE WALL ELEVATION, EXPRESSING GOOD SCALE RELATIONS AND EMPHASIZING BY DECORATIVE EFFECTS THE WINDOWS AND CHIMNEY PIECE TREATMENT.





Having established this relationship, a chair which is one-fourth as big as a cabinet or a table should have a leg not as big as the table but in a scale somewhat corresponding to its size, as its size relates to the table dimensions.

A notable example of lack of feeling in scale is the manner in which the tops of tables jut beyond their structural leg formation. Certain periods in the Italian Renaissance have established a projection long enough to seem to be adequate for the scale and height of the table itself. This same strict adherence to scale in its jut may be seen in the roofs of Italian palaces of the same period, notably in those of the Strozzi, Antinori and Riccardi in Florence. These have cornices projecting in a scale charmingly related to the scale of the façade, the height of the building, the material of which it is made and to the general proportions of the exterior of the building.

By comparing Italian tables with those of the Elizabethan or Early Renaissance in England, where the projection is from two to three inches, instead of eight or nine inches, one easily perceives the cut or dwarfed feeling of the top. One gets an impression of lack of material as well as lack of proportion in the top as it relates to the rest of the table.

It is a curious and interesting study to note this one instance of scale relationship through the remainder of the English periods. Starting with the Italian as a basis and taking the Elizabethan as a matter of comparison, let us look at the ways in which the Jacobean period worked out this idea. As the material lessened in amount, in thickness and in scale, the top extended a

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bit, and a better relation in scale resulted than in the Elizabethan period, where the proportion, so far as the top is concerned, seemed to be entirely lost. In the Queen Anne and Georgian styles one can readily see the effect as each interpreter saw it of the scale relation of the object and the scale feeling of its material influencing the matter of the distance in the extension of the top.

This relation is quite as apparent in cabinets, dressers, chests of drawers and writing tables, which articles of furniture were developed with the need for them as civilization advanced.

With this period illustration in mind, one should examine his own furniture and the furniture of others to see whether in each case he considers every part and detail to be in perfect scale relation to every other part. If some one feature is unduly prominent or so undersized that it loses its functional power or fails to play its part in the construction of a significant form, or to conform to the rule of unity in scale, he will then discover it.

Having looked over each article, one should see these different articles as they relate to each other; and more important still, should consider whether the single articles of furniture are too large or too small for the room in which they are placed.

It often happens that assembling many horizontal pieces of furniture in a room which is as tall as it is wide or long creates a very queer feeling. The same feeling would be created in the room if all the articles it contained were vertical in their effect.

To understand how to make a room look larger or smaller than it is, is to help know how to choose furniture in correct scale relationships—first, to the room itself,



FORMAL, BISSYMETRIC WALL TREATMENT, ILLUSTRATING REST, FORMALITY AND SIMPLICITY. SUCCESSFUL EMPHASIS GIVEN THE CENTRE AND BENCH BY THE SELECTION AND PLACEMENT OF WALL DECORATION. STRUCTURALLY DECORATED.





and then to every other article with which it must be associated. Constant care is necessary to determine anything like a reasonable standard of scale relationship unless one is trained through years of study by either drawing, measuring or calculating in some way the exact relation of details as they have to do with each other in the construction of any unit.

In analyzing the concept or mental picture one has of any object which he sees or sound which he hears, he is quite likely to forget that consciousness is the result of impressions received in five ways. These five ways, represented by the five senses—sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste—are the avenues through which our ideas or impressions of external things come.

Some persons see more correctly than they hear; others hear more correctly than they see; many gain a large part of their ideas of objects from the tactile sense, or the sense of touch.

We are quite likely to believe that all ideas come from the sense of sight, if we see more correctly than we hear, or gain ideas more easily that way than by any other. To all persons many ideas come originally through the sense of touch. This fact has given to all visual objects a quality which we call texture. That is, because we have touched a round object some time and acquired the idea of rotundity, we see an object as round, mentally, when one is presented to the sense of sight. The quality of roughness, smoothness, flexibility, rigidity, and similar qualities, were first acquired through the sense of touch.

A burlap cloth looks rougher than an India silk; chiffon looks more flexible than taffeta; oak appears

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coarser, firmer and more rugged than mahogany or boxwood; olive wood has a silk-faced look; Italian walnut approaches this but still shows traces of grain, making it somewhat coarser because of this.

A tightly woven linen looks and feels firm, more decided, harder, less yielding and less graceful in its possibilities than charmeuse silk, the qualities of which are exactly opposite to those described.

Wood, textiles, metals, potteries and all made objects have a quality known as texture which is fundamental in the idea of harmony between objects which are to be used together. It must not be understood that all things that are to be used together must have precisely the same texture feeling. If they did, the result would be a monotonous textile composition. Consistent variety, however, must obtain.

If, on the other hand, the wood in a room has the feeling of oak, the hangings the feeling of chiffon or charmeuse, the rug the texture of hemp or heavy wool, while the ornaments represent the texture of bisque or Sevres ware, there can be little hope of textural harmony in the composition. To be sure, putting these in the right colour may lessen the textural significance, since scaling them properly and pleasingly makes the textural difference less noticeable. To arrange them in perfect composition helps to make good effects out of bad ones. A complete criticism or analysis of a situation can never be made until the question of texture has been considered either intellectually or through the sense of feeling.

Some people, who are sensitive enough, know immediately when textures are too unrelated to be harmoni-



HALLWAY AND DINING-ROOM IN A SUBURBAN HOUSE; GOOD EXCEPT RUG (TOO STRONG AND AGGRESSIVE) AND THE DECADENT PLANT STAND AT THE LEFT, WHOLLY OUT OF HARMONY WITH ALL OTHER DETAILS IN THE ROOM.



ous. More, however, are oblivious to this distinction and cannot remedy even the simplest inconsistency because they are unable to see what is wrong. There is, of course, a third class—those who never know anything is wrong, and this discussion may serve to awaken in such at least a spirit of investigation.

To show how important the cultivation of this sensitiveness is, let me remind you that there are certain countries in which the development of the tactile sense is considered so important that special lessons are given in the following way: all children, until they reach the ages of twelve or fourteen years, are put in a class, blindfolded, and led to tables on which are placed, in mixed piles, pieces of straw braid varying in degrees of textile coarseness, undressed pieces of wood, different qualities of lace, silk and other textiles, feathers, soft and stiff, and materials of various kinds which one is likely to encounter in furnishing a house or clothing the body.

Children are asked to select a wood and a silk that feel right together, then to add to these something in metal or pottery, a piece of lace, a feather, a bit of straw, or other material, until they have found, by feeling, such things as they consider texturally harmonious. With the bandage removed, they then compare what they have chosen by feeling with what they would choose by sight, and are so led to sense relationships in these combinations. If this training is continued for some time, it is clear that the habit must be formed of recognizing relationships, as well as of investigating those relationships before accepting anything as good. After a time, of course, this becomes an unconscious



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process. No process of analysis should be a conscious one when it has reached the stage of development where it can be made a part of the unconscious or subconscious self. Only when these things are a part of the subconscious self are they really effective in developing the art idea.

Training the mind to sense one quality at a time, and that thoroughly, is a step in the development of the final idea. When, however, the perception of this quality has become a habit it is time to sense with like accuracy the next quality, then the next and the next, and so on, until one unconsciously feels a good and correct thing and, equally, is able to decide at once when a thing is not right or correct, or that this, that or the other quality is wrong in feeling. The value of this viewpoint to the interior decorator, or to the person who would appreciate art in any applied form, is absolutely immeasurable. Only the genius can appreciate, create and criticise in any field, but in any one may be developed to a considerable degree the ability to appreciate, to create and to criticise, if he accepts one thing at a time and trains himself to perceive correctly.

A right application of this textural sense will show that one cannot put olive wood and antique oak in the same unit without at least a considerable manipulation of space between them. Burlap and chiffon will not enter harmoniously into a texture scheme, even if they are both made of silk and have the same colour. It will be much harder to harmonize them if one happens to be done in cheap cotton and the other in expensive silk while their colours differ. Pieces of orna-

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ment like *bisque* and wrought iron are by their textures somewhat inharmonious, but not more so than are other articles of furniture or upholstery which we daily attempt to put together.

This description of texture is not meant to be complete. It is intended simply to arouse in the mind of the reader a realization of the importance of recognizing this quality and its power in the artistic concept. It may also bring about a consciousness of harmony in texture or its lack.

Before leaving the general fundamentals of this subject for the historic and specific ones, it is essential to have a common perception of what is meant by motifs in decoration. It is sometimes easier to see the significance of this if one thinks first of the motif as it appears in musical composition. A short passage or two perhaps conveys, or is meant to, the fundamental theme or idea around which the composition is built. To the person who understands music this short passage is the key or cue and is the source of the enlargements, the broadenings, the accessories and the tracings of all that comes after it.

One sees the same thing in a literary composition. There must be a theme upon which to write, a motif around which all parts of the composition are woven. In decoration there must also be a theme or motif, a something which expresses the fundamental idea but which is changed, enlarged, broadened, coloured, cut, added to, and finally, with all its parts, woven into a decorative whole.

The decorative motif as it refers to ornament may be said to originate in one of two sources: the first

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source, nature, is one from which many periods have taken their inspiration and which some periods have misused, since by their treatment in materials nature lost its own individuality and was misrepresented in the attempt to make decoration nature.

On the other hand, nature did not become decoration. As Goethe has said, "Art is art because it is not nature." Therefore, to become art or decoration, nature must lose its fundamental characteristics. This is one of the most difficult things to grasp in the whole realm of decorative art. So thoroughly are people—and it is right that they should be—imbued with a love for nature as nature, that it is impossible for them to leave nature to nature's realm and to realize that nature cannot, as nature, be art, since nature is God's realm and art is man's.

It is man's function to select from nature bits of the great whole and to arrange them for his needs in an artistic way. This he may do in his garden, his grounds, or in a vase on his library table, but it is not his function in foreign materials to attempt to make his garden or his grounds or his vase of flowers look as they would look or did look when they were created in their own natural environment as a part of the scheme of nature rather than of man's adaptation of it. So long, therefore, as a rose is a rose, whether it is in the garden or on the table, it looks practically the same; but its appearance is very different as a rose, or as one of two or three roses, in a vase on the table, from what it was as one of five hundred or a thousand on a bush, where the environment of the bush had also its effect.

This is not so hard to see, however, as the next

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LIVING-ROOM, ILLUSTRATING A PARTICULARLY FINE SENSE OF SCALE RELATIONS IN DECORATIVE MOTIFS. COMPARE THE SCALE OF WALL CARVING WITH CHIMNEY PIECE, PICTURE FRAME, TABLE, LAMP, HANGINGS AND RUGS. THIS CHOICE PRODUCES A HARMONY OF SEQUENCE, IMPOSSIBLE WHEN DISREGARDED. ALSO NOTICE SIMPLICITY IN TREATMENT OF CEILING AND PANELS, THEREBY MAKING OTHER DECORATIVE FEATURES POSSIBLE. PICTURE AT LEFT OF MANTEL NOT NEEDED IS PHOTOGRAPH





step in which the rose is to be translated into a carpet, a damask or a painted dish. While it is possible for the rose to become decorative in the vase, it is impossible for it to be so if man attempts to create a rose, exactly as God created it, and do so with wool, silk or china.

To be sure, the wax flowers of fifty years ago were nearer like nature than the hair ones of seventy-five years ago or the shell ones of one hundred years ago, but, for my part, of the three I believe the shell ones to be the most decorative, for they, at least, had the distinction of not looking like that which they were not. As sincerity is the first principle of art, I see in them some possibility of decorative effect.

Nature, then, is the first source from which decorative ornament has been drawn, and such ornament is called naturalistic ornament. Volumes could be written on what has happened in every field of art expression when nations have drawn their ideals from naturalism. Then idealism has given place to realism, symbolism to naturalism, while spirituality and æstheticism have given place to materialism and sensualized nature.

This is not the place to discuss the philosophy of the naturalistic ornament, but it readily will be seen what happens when a nation has reached a point where its natural life interests find their best expression in purely naturalistic ornamental forms. Perhaps one might cite the Roman Empire, the high period of the French Renaissance, the naturalistic Victorian period in England, and the black walnut and painted china periods in the United States.

The second source for ornament is found in the ab-

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stract idea. The Greeks, through centuries of evolution, produced ornament of pure form. Its beauty is in its proportion, in the exquisite relationships of abstract sizes, shapes and lines. It never was nature and never purported to be. Its charm, which is classic, lies in its impersonality or abstraction and in its exquisite abstract relationships.

The Mohammedans evolved for religious reasons an Arabesque system of ornament in which no natural motif is found. Its surface charm, which is undeniable, is due to the intricate relationships of abstract motifs in which naturalism has played no part and nature has not been defamed. Other periods, following these two early ones, have also developed abstract ornament which never was and never purported to be natural in its origin.

These two sources, symbolically and decoratively, are the well springs out of which human ingenuity has created ornament shapes through all ages. Man's love for nature and nature's forms of expression, together with his religious ideals which connect natural objects with the divine idea, has introduced nearly always into the art of nations animal and plant forms as a part of their decorative plan.

The ancient Egyptians used the human figure, birds, animals, and trees, each representing an externalized divinity as a part of their hieroglyphic scheme. They treated these objects in flat single tones drawn without perspective and modified in form, size and shape in such a way that they fitted rather pleasingly together and assumed a somewhat decorative appearance.

The Assyrians were wont to use chariots, human



WOMAN'S SITTING-ROOM IN MODERN STYLE, EXPRESSING A PERSONALITY OF REFINEMENT, RESTRAINT, CONSISTENCY AND COMFORT. GOOD MIRROR AND PICTURE FRAMES. SHAPE AND SIZE OF PICTURE GOOD. SCALE OF TEXTILE MOTIFS EXCELLENT.



beings and implements of war to illustrate their caste systems and various social forms in bas relief. In this manifestation of their art they used many of nature's symbols.

The danger came when realism demanded a perfect exposition in pictorial effect of every detail as it was, rather than as it should be to suit the conditions under which it was to be used. At times certain nations have appreciated the relation of the decorative motif to the material in which it was to be rendered. In Gothic tapestries ornament was arranged decoratively. The decadent Italian Renaissance conceived tapestries only as a picture of social life, and it lost almost entirely its decorative effect.

The translation of the rose or the lily onto the material of a carpet, wall paper, or a plate is impossible unless the rose be modified into the feeling or meaning of the material in which it is to appear. I believe it was Ruskin who said that "Conventionalization is the translation of nature into man's material." A conventionalized motif is that decorative motif which has been so modified in shape, size, colour and proportion that it is exactly suited to the material in which it is rendered.

The significant fact to grasp in this matter is the difference between a motif which attempts to picture details which are beyond its power to portray, and which are non-essential, and one that seeks to relate itself perfectly to the material in which it is expressed while it suggests rather than depicts those details which every intelligent person knows exist.

Conventionalized motifs, then, are motifs which can



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exist in any material but not in nature, and a desire for a perfectly naturalistic picture in these things seems unbelievable in a civilized people.

Perhaps there is no family of any culture in this country that does not believe some one Madonna to be a beautiful picture. Perhaps the Mona Lisa has as large a number of admirers as any portrait in existence. It is well to ask ourselves how many pictures of the chosen Madonna or the Mona Lisa we should be willing to have in our living-room or our bedroom at the same time. I am sure no one would choose more than one. How, then, can people consistently desire several hundred worse pictures of roses, or other flowers badly drawn, badly arranged, and badly carried out in material? It needs but a little thought to lead one to see that only in masterpieces of historic art has there been an approach to the use of nature in a realistic way so that the result is an artistic and decorative effect.

Perhaps this is the best place in this discussion to call attention to the necessity for care in the selection of different motifs that are to go into the same room. It is easy to see that varying degrees of naturalistic treatment and conventional arrangement in rugs, chairs, hangings, wall coverings, etc., would inevitably introduce into a room impossible combinations of decorative ornament.

The ornament of the rug, which is usually abstract, particularly in the Oriental types, is hard to harmonize with conventional Art Nouveau upholstery and hangings and with naturalistic wall paper. The abstract and the conventional may sometimes appear together if neither is too prominent. The very conventional and



A MODERN LIBRARY-LIVING-ROOM EXPRESSING, ON A SIMPLE, WELL-SPACED BACKGROUND, EXCELLENT CHOICE IN SIZE AND PLACING OF PICTURES; TREATMENT OF MANTEL; ARRANGEMENT OF RUGS AND FURNITURE GROUPING. THE GROUPING OF THE FURNITURE SHOWS CLEARLY THE THOUGHTS OF COMFORT AND FUNCTION ALL IN AN INDIVIDUAL RESTRAINED WAY.



the nearly naturalistic are very ugly together. The purely naturalistic should never appear, and the abstract is rather formal.

The scale in these motifs, so far as the room unit is concerned, is of fundamental importance. Often a room is spoiled in effect by contrasting some very tiny, insignificant and weak motif with a large, strong and prominent one. Even if the furniture and other objects are well scaled, the motifs may destroy the scale unit of the room as well as its arrangement.

The more one studies ornament the more he realizes that nations, peoples and eras have expressed new types of civilization by the source, the treatment and the application of its motifs for decorative purposes. We are living in an age when all these vast resources are at our command. The trouble with us is that we approach them with the idea that each must be good under any circumstances, and since it is an ornament it must be a decoration. Then if we approach the resources of several eras at the same time, each expressing an individual idea, and combine their products without care in a room, an inharmonious aggregate of motifs must be the result.

In this field, then, of decorative ornament there can be no harmony unless there is understanding. Better by far a perfectly plain textile, rug or wall—yes, and even china—than those in which the inharmonious use of motifs as to source, kind and treatment destroys the otherwise unified expression.

One caution more is essential. If motifs appear in the wall cover they should not appear in the hangings or the floor in any considerable prominence. If they

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appear in the hangings and upholstery, they should not appear in the wall. Moderation, temperance and restraint in the use of decorative motifs are the strongest correctives for ornate and badly mixed expression in house furnishing.



## PART II



## PART II

## CHAPTER VI

### HISTORIC ART PERIODS AND THE IDEAS WHICH THEY REPRESENT

LIFE is action; its result is evolution, and out of this ceaseless activity comes man's universal impulse to create. Mental life is constantly changing. Environment also is subject to constant variation; hence man's needs are continually presented in different forms. Because of these conditions, both physical and mental, man's creative impulse finds its natural outlet in the satisfaction of these needs. He is impelled by his instinctive appetites to provide for himself food, drink, shelter and air. By his mental desires he is urged to create such things as will satisfy his æsthetic sense or his appetite for beauty, which is as universal an instinct in man as are the physical appetites.

As states of civilization have changed and different conditions have evolved different needs man has adapted his creative work to the approximate satisfaction of these needs, so that in all times the works of man have spoken eloquently of his ideals, his interests, his necessities and his desires.

This makes art objects, so-called, of vital human interest to him who sees them as man's psychological expression. The objects of art that remain express two distinct elements in man's life—fitness for *use* and

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*beauty.* Their adaptability to our needs may or may not be expressed in their fitness for their own time, but the degree of beauty they reveal is perceptible now and will be forever, for the quality of beauty is eternal.

There are two ways of looking at a period in art: first, from the viewpoint of its fitness, or the fitness of its various objects to fulfill the requirements of modern comfort and convenience. While an art object may have adequately expressed this fitness to the generation in which it was created, it is often quite impossible to satisfy our conception of fitness with the same object. Its adaptation without loss of character is the problem of modern usage.

Looking at it from the second viewpoint, an art period must be considered with regard to its value or its power as a decorative expression in the furnishing of a modern house.

A due regard to these distinctions will ensure such a choice and arrangement of furnishings of any period as will not only conform to modern conditions, but will form with these conditions a harmonious unit. This subject will be further considered in Part III.

History is a record of life. It is a record not only in words but in stone, metal, wood and other materials, and takes the form of architecture, sculpture, ornament, furniture, clothes and the like. We learn much of how the Romans lived from the fragments of architecture which are left. More eloquent than words are Greek sculpture, the Gothic Cathedral and the French palaces. In no way can the ideals and practices of a people be so definitely embodied as in those objects which they in their time create to represent their various needs and

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desires. To regard history, then, as a mere matter of word record is to miss entirely the intimate relation that exists between art objects and the people who create them. This viewpoint of periods as a historical expression is important and will be considered throughout this work.

A period in art may be described as a period of time in which one dominant influence controlled the various expressions of some nation's life interest. Perhaps no one person more completely dominated the art of any period than did Louis XIV in France. The political situation which he created, the religious ideas which he promulgated, and the social régime which grew out of his ideas and practices found their concrete expression in the gorgeous, pageant-like forms characterizing the period of Louis XIV. This expression was by no means a crystallized fact in the early days of the reign of this sovereign, neither did it remain intact until the day of his death. It was modified by outside influences, which perhaps for the time being were stronger even than his or those of his associates who dominated the royal thought. There is always the transition from the last period to the one under consideration, and the transition from the considered one to the one which follows. Each of these will be marked by conflicting ideas.

In the study of periods it is most desirable that one should have the clearest possible conception of the idea for which the period stands when it is at its highest degree of perfection. Study all kinds of objects made during those periods for the discovery of common elements. Analyze those elements for ideas or qualities which they represent and then interpret all other parts



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of the period and all associated periods by these quality ideas, rather than by set dates, set terms, or crystallized forms.

In discussing a period one must always consider all that has gone before, that is, all influences that are hereditary and that have affected the local period by contact. Then there are national characteristics influencing the period creation, individual preferences and desires which are associated with the dominating person or persons of that period, and the general needs of the civilization which, after all, furnish the keynote to the art of every well-defined period.

It is better in this brief discussion to take the broadest possible conception of period art and to try to establish in a limited way a relationship between man, his ideas or aims, and the materials with which he expresses these. This will establish at least a fundamental working basis for period study and further investigation.

Eliminating Asiatic influences, there have been, broadly speaking, three great manifestations or types of expression out of which have been formulated lesser ones at various times under local conditions. Each of these three dominating influences has in turn been preponderant in the various periods. These three influences may be named, for the sake of clearness, the Classic or Hellenic, the Gothic or Christian, and the Humanistic or Materialistic Natural.

In the working out of these three ideas man has been moved or impelled to create by three distinct impulses. The highest and most important of these may be called the religious or spiritual impulse. Because of his desire to embody his highest ideals of religious duty we have

## MEANING OF THE GOTHIC AND HUMANISTIC IDEALS

THE SPIRIT, FEELING, OR MEANING OF THE GOTHIC AND HUMANISTIC INFLUENCES AS THEY WERE EXPRESSED IN MATERIALS IS PERHAPS MORE CLEARLY SHOWN IN PAINTING AND TAPESTRY THAN IN ANY OTHER FORM OF ART. THE IDEAL SPIRITUAL DISREGARD OF NATURE'S LAWS AS THEY INFLUENCE THE APPETITES AND SENSES OF MAN APPEARS IN GOTHIC ART EXPRESSIONS. THIS PERIOD IN ITS IDEAL IS THE ECSTATIC, EMOTIONAL, IMAGINATIVE EXPRESSION OF THE SPIRITUAL NATURE AS IT SEEKS TO THROW OFF THE NECESSITY FOR ADHERENCE TO MATERIAL LAW IN THE EXPRESSION OF THE SPIRITUAL OR DIVINE IDEA. IT DOES NOT SEEK TO BE HUMAN FIRST.

THE HUMANISTIC IDEAL SEEKS TO ASSOCIATE IN A RELATIVELY HARMONIOUS WAY THE PRIMAL INTENSIONS OF SPIRIT AND MATERIAL AS THEY ARE EXPRESSED IN PHYSICAL MATERIAL.

IN THE EARLIEST STAGES, WHERE THE SPIRITUAL IDEA WAS DOMINANT, THE RESULTS ARE BEAUTIFUL THOUGH CLEARLY HUMAN. IN THE LATER STAGES, WHERE SELF-GRATIFICATION OF THE SENSES IS THE ACCEPTED PRACTICE, THE EXPRESSION BECOMES EXTRAVAGANT, MIXED, OVER-LUXURIOUS, SENSUOUS, NATURALISTIC AND WHOLLY MATERIALISTIC.

PRECISELY THESE SAME QUALITIES APPEAR IN ARCHITECTURE, FURNITURE, THE LESSER ARTS, AND IN THE CHOICE AND TREATMENT OF ORNAMENT. THIS IS CONFINED TO NO ONE COUNTRY, BUT IS A COMMON INHERITANCE OF ALL PEOPLE POSSESSED OF THE SAME IDEALS.





I. AN EARLY SIENESE GOTHIC MADONNA AND CHILD EXPRESSING THE SPIRITUAL QUALITY FIRST, THEN THE ÆSTHETIC IN CHOICE AND ARRANGEMENT WITH DISREGARD FOR THE PHYSICAL LAWS OF ANATOMY, AGE MARKS AND SO-CALLED PRINCIPLES OF REPRESENTATION. THE RESULT AIMS AT A SPIRITUAL IDEAL EXPRESSED THROUGH MATERIAL.







2. AN EARLY TAPESTRY WITH THE GOTHIC SPIRIT AND A DECORATIVE QUALITY MOST APPARENT; BUT THE IMAGINATIVE, CHIVALRIC, SECULAR QUALITIES BEAUTIFULLY COMMINGLED. THE RESULT IS CHARMINGLY DECORATIVE AND SUITABLE TO ITS MATERIAL.





3. A PAINTING WHICH SHOWS PLAINLY THE LINGERING TRACES OF REFINEMENT, IMAGINATIVE AND DECORATIVE QUALITY OF THE GOTHIC IDEA, BUT EXPRESSING FIRST THE IDEAL CHARM OF THE PAGAN CLASSIC HUMANISM AT ITS BEST.







5. A LATER TAPESTRY IN WHICH THE HUMANISTIC IDEAL IS TRIUMPHANT. THE SENSES ARE SUPREME.





the monuments of Egypt, the beautiful temples of the Greeks, and the cathedrals of the Gothic period.

When the second, or political impulse prevails, man's greatest energy is bent toward the creation of imposing public structures with accessories which will embody his ideas of political power and will tend duly to impress others with their national strength and importance. The Roman period is perhaps a good example of such domination.

The third impulse to create is found in man's social ideal. Whenever the social idea has been dominant—as it was in the days of the High French Renaissance—then man's energies have been directed toward the creation and expression of all those things which social intercourse and refined social practice seem to make essential.

In this era we live in the grasp of a commercially social impulse, with the leading idea, commercial advancement, dominating even the social quality. This, of course, is the lowest and most inartistic viewpoint possible, since the creation of beautiful things demands a love for those things which is stronger than any mere material gain which can result from their creation. The art standard of the modern period is in consequence less sensitive, less clearly defined and less exalted than perhaps any that has previously existed.

In treating of the three great influences—Hellenic, Gothic and Humanistic—it is essential to get the clearest possible idea of what each of these periods sought to embody. The ancient Greek lived for centuries with one idea in mind—namely, the expression of divinity in perfect material form. Education and

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practice were both planned to develop the highest standards and the highest ideals of physical expression in the human body and in all material forms that men produced. Greek statuary did not happen to be what it is. Each piece is the concrete embodiment of an idea, the development of which took centuries of inheritance and a nation-wide devotion to the idea that beauty is God.

Certain qualities must be held supreme in consciousness in order to bring out those qualities in the materials which man touches. This short treatise cannot point out the analogies which exist between the objects of visual art and the literature or music of the time, but it can indicate some of the qualities of mind necessary to the realization of this perfect, intellectual, unemotional and restrained period expression. With beauty and truth as an ideal expressed in material, the Greek would naturally follow in ideal at least the same plan in the development of the body, in architecture, in ornament, in the utensils commonly used and, in short, in all things which he handled.

In order to accomplish this perfect representation of material beauty, temperance or restraint in all things is a fundamental virtue. "Never anything in excess" is the law which makes the successful handling of material objects possible. No other people ever came so near to a realization of this ideal as did the Greek. Greek expression shows restraint, unemotional expression and perfect form. These qualities are readily seen in sculpture but should be just as apparent in the long lines, the simple arrangements, the perfect adaptations and the consistent combinations in architecture, ornament and the lesser arts.

It has been said that three descriptive words are enough to summarize the Hellenic Ideal and that, having grasped these three words in their full meaning, the quality of everything classic may be tested by them.

The first word is "simplicity." Whatever savours of unnecessary display is entirely foreign to the Greek idea. The simplest expression when adequate is always best.

The second word is "sincerity." How terribly have the nations of the earth departed from this idea, even in their adaptations of classic art. The ancient column with its beautiful proportions and wonderful materials was created as an honest support to a weight above. The juttings, the friezes and the architraves are essential elements in the decorative idea of the buildings but are first a part of the constructive necessities of the building. To superimpose these parts in stucco, plaster or tin, upon a steel structure or a brick wall, is not only a defamation of the noble Greek idea but is a farce in the field of modern architecture and decoration.

The third word is "consistency." This quality may be a little more difficult of perception at this point but not so difficult that it may not be grasped for application to all cases. When the Greek designed a column he considered this column a unit, and its shaft and capital were made in the same material, appearing as one piece when complete. If statuary occupied space within the gable of the temple or in specially designed niches, this statuary seemed to take its place in size, scale, form and line within its enclosure in such a way that the building as a unit expressed repose. Much of this was due to the perfect scale relation be-

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tween the enclosures and the figures. Ornament, in consistent amounts, was consistently applied in the right places. During the highest development of the Greek ideal violations of the principle of beauty through inconsistent relationships are not found.

It is a grave mistake to believe that all things are classic which seem to represent the forms or shapes or motifs of the classic period. Nothing can be further from the classic ideal than the misuse of the three orders, the various decorative motifs, and the Greek figures as they are used in this country to-day, although a great change for the better is noticeable since the invasion of this field by the great architect, Stanford White.

It is not in the copy of these forms that the classic idea is expressed. It is in the sincere and consistent choice and application of them as well as their adaptation to period needs. The artist should realize and make a part of his mental equipment the wonderful idealism as shown in abstract proportion that dominates all Hellenic expression.

From time to time great men in all the fields of period expression have studied the classic for inspiration, and their work has been just as near the classic ideal as their realization of the qualities of form which the classic expressed would permit. The adaptation of the classic has been influenced in all times, more or less, by local conditions as well as by the state of mind of the man who interpreted the idea.

The sensing of fundamental quality in period study is the only way to gain an understanding of what periods are and to become anything but a slavish parrot copyist, always missing the essential idea.



## HISTORIC ART PERIODS

The second great art influence came from the birth of the Christian religion. The pagan Greek had in mind the idealization of the body and other material things. The Christian religion took "no thought for the body, what it should eat or drink, or wherewithal it should be clothed." It directed its thought energy to the soul and its preparation for a future state.

This difference of ideal brought about the wonderful change in art expression which found its full flower in the Gothic cathedral of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. To grasp anything of the meaning of this ingenious, imaginative and emotional symbolic art is the work of years. Well-focussed action brought about an expression of the ecclesiastical idea, first moderately, but finally in the flamboyant Gothic spirit. All feeling, joy and gratitude became one concentrated mass or hallelujah expression in which stone, metal, wood and glass vie with each other to express the wonderful story. As this period reaches its highest point of development it seems almost to eliminate material and to leave a vast network or lacelike fabric of symbolic spiritual expression.

To attempt to compare this great period with the classic is impossible because of the entirely different point of view. To endeavour to unite the two in spirit or expression without or within the house is well-nigh impossible. Each has its place and each is the expression of a type of life which has never been repeated and probably never will be. To restore or rebuild a Gothic cathedral under the conditions of modern thought is as impossible as for man to create a world. But one or

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two persons in this century have made even an approach to such an achievement.

The period last discussed used nature and naturalistic motifs as symbolic of Christian ideas, and treated them in a conventional manner more or less suited to the material into which they were translated. This treatment, however, was not as conventional as it might have been had the state of civilization and the methods of expression in other fields been developed as they have been since.

The third influence, which I have called the humanistic influence, is the one which proceeded from the Italian Renaissance and has been a ruling factor in the development of all subsequent period ideas. This influence was nature with all its manifestations in the life of man, affecting all those things which he uses. It differed from the Hellenic idea in just this particular: the Greek saw nature as God's expression of beauty in creation; the Humanist saw nature as belonging to man for man's personal gratification.

The danger in this viewpoint can be appreciated by the simplest mind. So long as man's thought was Gothic or Hellenic, there was no risk in the use of nature in all its forms, so soon, however, as the humanistic idea took firm root its abuse began. The ascetic, fragile, spiritual beauty of the Gothic period gave way before the naturalistic, human ideal of the High Renaissance. The luxurious display of nature's symbols perished in the decadent conception of those who saw in sensuous beauty only an appetite gratification.

This decadent naturalism has served as a source of inspiration for artists in various periods and for those in

this country who have been addicted to the selection of such materials as the only expressions of art.

If one remembers the two viewpoints of nature discussed above and the expression of spiritual beauty in which the Gothic stands supreme, he will perceive the three influences which have dominated men in the evolution of the so-called periods in art history.

No attempt will be made in this book to treat of the Italian Renaissance which is a subject far too broad to attempt in a small space. It may be possible, however, to suggest the filtration of these three great influences through Italian life, which really gives the key to the interpretation of all modern periods in France, England and the United States.

The Italian Renaissance expressed itself in three great epochs—namely, the Early, High and Decadent.

The Early period was the expression of humanism in Greek forms filtered through a Gothic consciousness. The result was a dignified, strong, sincere, consistent return to nature and to the structural principles that governed the expression of man's requirements. This period is wonderfully beautiful in its conception and in its material expression.

The High period represents the same idea, but the civilization of that time called for a wider social expression, a more vigorous and versatile life, more luxury and a less formal adherence to the traditions of the past.

The Decadent period abandoned itself to fantastic conceptions and combinations of structural and decorative objects. Consequently impossible versions of nature's forms appeared, a various and incongruous

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treatment of these ensued, while structural proprieties were disregarded.

The inordinate display of this period is responsible in no small degree for the tawdriness and vulgarity that has characterized much of our social expression for the last one hundred years. If this is not directly traceable to the third period of the Renaissance it is so indirectly, for the worst phases of this period that showed themselves during the reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV have been admired and frequently copied. Being accepted as representing the best in French art, they have had an influence out of proportion to their merit. The average tourist, and in fact some so-called artists, have found in the examples of this decadent style their only source of enjoyment in Italy and France, and have returned to us not even guessing the importance of what they have missed in the less obtrusive and more refined expressions of the same period.

The value of knowing thoroughly the fundamentals of any period may be recognized through the analogy in learning a language, in the study of music, and in the acquisition of knowledge in any field where expression is possible to us. From time to time, in the discussion of various periods, it will be necessary to speak of these Italian periods and of the three great influences which made them, referring to them by name or by the qualities for which they stand. The principal reason for having treated them in this way is to arouse in the mind of the reader the desire to study them carefully before attempting to know later periods or trying to interpret them as mere matters of structural form and ornamental treatment.

## HISTORIC ART PERIODS

The more thoroughly one realizes the qualities which each period and each part of it represents, the more adequately is he informed as to the material from which he may draw in solving his problem, whatever it may be. The longer one studies the more convinced he is that, after all, the really vital things are very simple and few in number. The failure on the part of any of us to create a truly adequate expression of our ideas is largely due to the fact that we have missed in our research and study the fundamental truths which each object embodies.

To summarize, then, let us remember that a period has no positively definite time limit marked by the birth and death of anybody, but that three great ideas have dominated peoples, and the expression of these ideas has been their art.

Let us also remember that each period at its highest point of development is the most adequate possible expression of the ideas which dominate that era. It is necessary to keep in mind the difference between the form and the spirit of a thing. If the external form only is understood, one never knows whether a copy expresses the idea or not. It may vary in proportion and relations in such a way as to have a totally different meaning from that which it expressed when originally created. The qualities which the original embodied are permanent and, whether the same forms or different ones are used in the new creation, the qualities of the old should be apparent.

With these things clearly in mind, we may look briefly at the expressions of the French and English periods, and then we should try to see the relation of these to



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our own clearly defined Colonial period. Thus we may consider the modern problem, which is not the copy or reproduction of any period but the knowledge of the forces and qualities of all periods and the adaptation of these to modern social, political and religious requirements.

## PART II

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE AND THE FRENCH STYLES

GOTHIC art was indigenous to the soil of France. By temperament, association and practice the French people were the logical ones to accept, mature and express the Gothic idea. Unhampered for the most part by classic traditions, unfettered by a strong national expression, and still in a somewhat formative state, they accepted in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries the material which blossomed and bore fruit in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Gothic as an expression—particularly in architecture and furnishings—was an idea foreign to England and Italy, and by them expressed with a very strong tinge of national colouring. This betrays the national difference quite as strongly as it emphasizes the original Gothic formulation. Having matured and expressed the Gothic idea, the flower of its expression was found in cathedrals, monasteries, libraries, and in some details of the palaces of the king and of the highest nobles. So far as general domestic architecture, furnishings and decorative material are concerned, little remains, and probably little was produced, up to the time of Louis XII in the late fifteenth century.

On the other hand, the Renaissance, with all it signi-

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fied, was indigenous to the Italian soil because Italy was the home of classic and Roman traditions and everything classic in form was acceptable as an expression of that tradition. In France, however, the Renaissance was an affected style, as it was also in England and the northern European countries. It must necessarily be so, equally, in this country and at this time.

Consumed with the Gothic idea and having exhausted in ecstasy the materials necessary in telling its story, the French were ready by 1495 for a new idea. Earlier periods had seen the Crusades, and those taking part in them had passed through the land of the Renaissance into the influence of the Orient and, naturally, they had brought back with them to France more or less of the feeling which they had unconsciously absorbed. They also brought back souvenirs of these strange civilizations, and gradually public notice was drawn to the difference between their own products and these foreign forms of expression.

Louis XII, in his Italian campaign, grasped more than had any of his predecessors of the advanced state of civilization in that country and the forms in which this was expressed. His followers, too, returned with more and more accumulated souvenir material, some forms of which were applied to the Gothic background of the palaces in France. He may, therefore, be styled the forerunner of the Renaissance in France.

The Renaissance really began with Francis I who came to the throne in 1515. By birth, association, temperament and disposition he was of the quality likely to demand change, refinement, a more or less flippant expression of social ideals, and a fulness of beauty in social



(A.) SKETCH SHOWING THE EARLY ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ADAPTED TO THE COMFORTS OF A MODERN LIVING-ROOM, BUT RETAINING THE QUALITIES OF FORMALITY, STRENGTH AND RESTFUL ARRANGEMENT.



(B.) LATER ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ADAPTED IN LIGHTER SCALE TO A MODERN HALL. THIS POSSESSES THE SAME QUALITY OF REPOSE, RESTRAINT AND FORMALITY.





## THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE

expression which the pure Gothic idea forbade. Three great influences were set in motion by Francis I, which changed the whole complexion and direction of French endeavour and worked out the two great periods in French art which may be called the French Renaissance and the French period styles.

The first of these influences was the change in religious viewpoint during his reign. Instead of the concentration on religious idealism which characterized the earlier centuries, he focussed his thought and spent his time and his energy as well as that of his associates upon the development of the commercial social ideal. This phase of life involved the turning of constructive creative energies into the channels of architecture, furnishings and decoration, in order to satisfy its new demands.

Naturally, since Gothic was the expression of the centuries already past, he turned his attention to the cultivation and promulgation of the newer ideas of the Italian Renaissance. He visited Italy and saw for himself, persuaded artists to leave their country, furnished materials and directed forces—all to the attainment of this end.

The second modifying influence was the change which resulted in the social or domestic ideal. The strict adherence to the family vows and all that that entails had been the social ideal of the earlier national development. Francis, by openly inviting to court the most beautiful, cultured and fascinating women of the land, and by choosing successively the companionship of one or more of these to the exclusion of the rights of the queen, developed a new attitude toward social and domestic relations. This social change reached its cul-

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mination in the days of Louis XV in the eighteenth century. This difference in the power and place of woman in social and court life led to wild extravagances, and the most ingenious methods were employed to obtain new and subtle art expressions for the satisfaction of each favourite as she, in turn, enjoyed the royal favour.

Art, from this time on became, in France, more or less an art for women. Each epoch showed to a great extent the striving of artists in every field for something extravagant and beautiful which should be suited to the taste and refinement of *Milady*, whoever she might be. This fact places the French Renaissance and the French period styles at once in a category by themselves, their qualities being quite individual when compared with those of other nations.

The third influence was the rapidity with which France was organized, politically and socially, during this reign and, through the extension of commerce and international association, the accumulation of wealth which was lavishly expended in the social lines before indicated.

It is not our intention here to enter into details of the period of the Early Renaissance in France, but to set in motion certain ideas which account for the maturity of the French styles as we know them and lead up to an appreciation of the value of these styles in modern decoration.

The French Renaissance may be said to include the time from the accession of Francis I in 1515 to the accession of Louis XIII in 1610, and was developed largely during the reign of Francis I, Henry II and Henry IV. The short reigns of Francis II and Henry

III have made so little impress on art styles that they are not worth mentioning in this connection.

The reign of Francis I, Henry II and Henry IV, however, are each dominated by particular ideas, and still the fundamental influences are the change in religious attitude, the birth and development of the new social ideas and practices, and the commercial relationships which made possible the rapid advancement in every line of creative endeavour.

It must be remembered here that there are three stages of development in all art periods. They may be called the Early, the High and the Decline. We look to the Early period for the finest expression of sane idealism which the period gives, to the High period for the rich, full, material display demanded by the principles which control the inception of the thought, and to the Decline for the complete materialization of the original idea with the loss of simple constructive necessities in the deluge of ornament and ostentatious display. We find also in the Decline an injection of materialistic, physical idealism where the æsthetic or the spiritual idea had dominated the original thought.

The period of Francis I represents the first idealism of the Renaissance in France. It may be said to express in its entirety the best period of the Italian Renaissance modified first by the temperamental qualities of the French people and then by the personality of Francis I and his immediate associates. Its architecture represents a tremendous step in the evolution of modern luxury and comfort. Its decorative appearance embodies the laws of decorative choice and arrangement sensed keenly and worked out in the adaptation

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of the best statement of Italian Renaissance forms. The textiles and textures are the expression of the fairly restrained, though beautifully decorated, ideas of the Middle Renaissance. The development of furniture was intensely interesting because the two new ideas, of beauty for the senses and of comfort for the body, were vying with each other for new fields in which to exercise the lately awakened instincts of a slumbering consciousness.

Tables, chairs, cabinets and chests were modified from the Italian material, scale, construction and combination to the distinctly French, which was smaller, lighter, less dignified, more domestic and less formal. In all other fields of endeavour the same general qualities of refinement, scope and concrete beauty are clearly felt. This was the beginning of the second great temperamental expression of the French people.

The period of Henry II may be briefly described as a cross between the style Francis I and the Baroque Italian Renaissance, with Francis I and Early Italian ideas strongly prevailing. Added to these two influences was the new Oriental idea, espoused and promulgated by many in the court, including the court favourite Diane de Poitiers. For her and through her came some of the finest expressions in the period of Henry II. Naturally a woman of exquisite taste, of liberal education and unlimited power, it was possible for her to develop, particularly in the interior of houses, the ideas to which the Early period had given birth.

Much of this period was devoted to the advancement of the art of tapestry weaving, wood carving and textile manufacture. At times the art seems to be dominated





EARLY ITALIAN ROOM EXPRESSING RESTRAINT AND STRENGTH OF THE EARLY MASCULINE TYPE.



EARLY ENGLISH ROOM EXPRESSING A DISTINCTLY MASCULINE FEELING, BUT LESS RUGGED IN APPEARANCE. FOR MODERN CONSIDERATION THE DEER HEAD MAY BE OMITTED.





by the High Renaissance or the early stages of the Decline in Italy. This was due, no doubt, to the influence exercised by the queen—Catherine de Médici—whose ideas and practices were always strictly Italian. She surrounded herself as much as possible with such Italian prelates, workmen and court ladies as would throw the weight of their influence toward Italian expression as opposed to that broadening type which was embraced by Diane de Poitiers. New kinds and more articles of furniture were in demand to satisfy the growing taste for display and comfort. Certain types of chests became cabinets, cabinets became sideboards, sideboards, dressing tables and writing desks, things unheard of in any country, even in Italy at that time. Ornament was a no less prolific field for creative genius.

The whole range of Italian Renaissance was exploited, resulting in a heaviness, a mixed aggregate, and a collection of forms lacking the delicacy, simplicity and refinement with which the period of Francis I speaks so eloquently. Architecture received little impetus although it became the function of the royal power to complete and add to the great number of buildings begun by Francis I and either left unfinished or found too small adequately to express the needs of his epoch.

Suffice it to say that the Renaissance reached its height of decorative possibility in the reign of Henry II, and lost in this reign—particularly toward its close—the exquisite qualities which the period of Francis I had given. This was the natural, spontaneous adaptation of the Italian Renaissance in genuine French feeling.

The period of Henry IV shows a strange conglomerate-

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tion. Born a Huguenot, and during the first part of his life a believer in all that the Huguenot faith proclaimed, his reign marks an epoch of consistent severity and plainness which outlines itself with great distinctness against the rich informalism of Henry II. Later in life, however, he and his followers seem to have lost the idea for which the Huguenot faith stands and to have realized that it was not the natural outcome of the conditions under which they lived.

No doubt the negotiations between France and Italy, in which Marie de Médici was sold to France to satisfy a debt, had much to do with the future development of this style. Although she was married to Henry IV, it must be remembered that her life was quite apart from that of the court as France knew it, and even from the king himself, for she was not crowned queen until a very few days before the assassination of the king.

The French conception, as already developed, was then established plus the ideas which Marie de Médici and her court imported directly from the Pitti Palace in Florence, where she had been brought up in a peculiarly isolated way in an uncongenial atmosphere. Her associates were bourgeois; she was lonely and piqued, discouraged and sad, whimsical, and by nature inclined to material things. The fact that she was starved in every way in her youth, bartered for a monetary consideration and placed in an impossible situation, may account for the kind of influence she exercised on the rest of this period and the Early period of her son, Louis XIII.

Being surrounded by persons inferior in birth and

culture, and not having the fullest confidence of the king and his ministers, she naturally sought to express herself in such things as would at least demand attention and remark from all with whom she came in contact. Evidently, too, there were certain persons of the court whose taste must be deferred to.

Architecturally, most of the work was the completion of things already begun. So far as furnishing was concerned, some new pieces were originated and others fell into disuse. Flemish artists began to make themselves felt because of the Edict of Nantes which gave religious freedom in France to all and was the signal for an influx of Flemish, English and West Germanic artisans. Nearly all of these represented the art crafts in some form. The finest workers in metal, wood, stone, cloth and other media found their homes in France. This influence is felt to the very end in the quality of the technique shown in the expression of any idea in any material up to the time of the French Revolution. Much, however, of its efficiency was lost with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in the last days of his life.

So far as the feeling in this period is concerned—and that is the important thing in this connection—it may be styled the decline or decadence of the Renaissance in France. It really corresponds in France to the decline of the Italian Renaissance which occurred from about 1550, and is characterized by the bourgeois taste which always chooses the most ornate, the showiest, and the most impossible things under the impression that they are true examples of refined artistic selection.

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Perhaps the most important conclusion to be derived from the period of Henry IV is that, given a plain, simple, dignified, sincere, consistently decorative thing and one which is involved, dissembling, unpardonably loaded with decoration and worked in unrelated motifs and materials, the bourgeois taste invariably selects the latter. This is partly due to the fact that all are not trained to select intelligently or reasonably, and most are not qualified through emotional endowment or training to select without stopping to think why a thing is, or is not, good. Neither this intuitive perception of consistency in decoration and beauty nor an intellectual conception or judgment of it was present in the dominating idea of the period of Henry IV.

To grasp the Baroque influence or the materialistic naturalistic substitution for idealism it is only necessary to study the type of persons, the quality of ornament, and the technique manifested in the tapestries of the day. This same aggregate quality idea was seen in the painting, as may be easily distinguished in the wonderful, though sensuous and voluptuous, paintings of the court of Marie de Médici by Rubens. Out of the same consciousness that chose and admired these tapestries and paintings came the choice of and admiration for the furnishings and fittings of the interior. Cabinets, chests, tables and chairs were not only covered with carved materials, but loaded with them. This decorative material consisted of a grotesque combination, impossible in nature and irregular in art, of human, animal, vegetable and mineral motifs naturalistically done but unthinkably combined.



This adaptation of the universe in a naturalistic form in all materials is no more art than it is nature. It is a misconception of the relation of nature to art, a misconception of decoration itself, and an evidence of wrong judgment as to the choice and application of decoration. It is the inevitable sign of a decadent taste and a love for show which entirely eclipses the power to distinguish the eternal fitness of things, which is the foundation of all art expression. The inspiration for all this was found in the life of the times. It was the natural consequence of the acceptance by the people of a foreign form of art expression with the many outside influences which modified its growth and the culmination of an idealism which puts physical, sensuous gratification before not only the spiritual law but the æsthetic conception as well.

While this period may be said to be the closing one of the French Renaissance, it is the foundation for the subsequent development of periods which may be called the French styles. There is much in the period of Francis I which may be copied or readapted with profit and pleasure in the development of the American ideal. Clearly, to actually copy the Francis I style is quite impossible since our conditions are so dissimilar.

The period of Henry II, too, presents structural features, forms, new articles of furnishing and decorative ideas which are really forces not only in the French periods but also in modern times if handled as force instead of objects to be copied.

Decorative features, textiles, pottery and the like found a beginning in these periods which in many others have not been improved upon for their decorative effect.

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Thus are decorative forces potential and may be used in many combinations and arrangements when one understands for what they stand. On the other hand, to copy these slavishly with backgrounds and accessories is quite as impossible as to so copy the architecture itself.

For the period of Henry IV there is less to be said. A selection of anything which is truly expressive of the period indicates a dearth of other material.

The French Renaissance may be said to end with the death of Henry IV in 1610, although its influence was felt for some years during the regency of Marie de Médici.

Louis XIII came to the throne in 1610, and was contemporary with James I and Charles I of England. During his reign of thirty-three years the transition from Renaissance to strictly French period styles took place. One of the marked characteristics of the French is their adaptability or susceptibility to new ideas and their assimilation, modification and re-expression of these ideas.

At the end of the reign of Louis XIII scarcely anything was left that could be called Renaissance in its form or feeling so thoroughly had it become modified by other influences and permeated with the true French atmosphere. Briefly considered, the period of Louis XIII—from the artistic decorative standpoint—illustrates the epoch of conflicting influences accepted, harmonized and reconstructed, and it paves the way for the magnificent development of the period of Louis XIV. By nature Louis XIII was less fitted to dominate a style than any of his predecessors. His genius and his atten-

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tion were devoted to quite other fields of development. But certain inevitable influences were felt that modified the national attitude and brought into its development new ideas which resulted in the grand periods that followed. One of the most interesting and one of the strongest influences for growth in the arts and letters is found in the power of Cardinal Richelieu.

Immediately upon his assuming a position of importance, Richelieu furthered the causes of science and art, and bent his energies toward the furthering of their development during the time of his power. In sympathy with scientific research and a devoted lover of the beautiful, he did much to pave the way for intensive development along these lines, in which his influence was felt for two centuries after.

The queen, Anne of Austria, a Spanish woman with all the inherent tendencies of strict, formal, Spanish etiquette, contributed no small part to the formulation of this new and very mixed type of art expression. Spanish art at this time was a mixture of the Saracenic influence as it was expressed in Granada and the Italian Decadence as it was espoused by the Spanish people. Grandeur, elegance, show and heaviness were the chief characteristics Anne of Austria contributed to the period of Louis XIII.

At this time the Flemish influence was felt in the form of twisted woods, simple rectangular structures, the scroll, and their peculiar treatment of the acanthus. Their methods eventually took firm root in French soil. Add to this the influence, through the Duke of Buckingham and his suite, of the English period known as that of Charles I, and one readily perceives how the period of

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Louis XIII received vast potential influences—Italian, Spanish, Saracenic, Flemish and English. All of these required to be assimilated, reconstructed and intelligently used to express the needs of the new phase of life into which France had entered.

Difficult it would indeed be to describe in a limited space the period of Louis XIII. Enough may be gleaned, however, from this brief discussion to stimulate the reader to historical research and period study, to make him realize that he is looking for the natural consequence that must follow the acceptance of certain ideas, and that any art expression is but the natural result of harbouring certain ideals and allowing the mind to see them as important factors in the satisfaction of life's requirements. This whole period may be said to be a transition between the adaptation of Italian styles to French use and the new idea of seeking structural and beauty elements anywhere, and using these elements in an adapted way to express the taste and intelligence of a people whose requirements or needs change as their civilization advances. In this way only is it possible to make a consistent use of the art forms of any period in the expression of individual needs.

## PART II

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FRENCH STYLES

THE period of Louis XIV, Le Grand Monarque, from 1643 to 1715, is not only the longest reign of any European monarch, but also by far the most important of any French king. The high tide of this period marks the epoch of absolute monarchy in France, and also of the crystallization of a national form of expression in all fields. This not only greatly influenced the subsequent French styles, but has been the source of inspiration in other national period forms.

Certain clearly defined conditions existed when Louis XIV assumed the reins of government, contributing each in its way to the climax reached during his reign.

First. France had organized and partially developed a political policy whose tendency was the extension of national domain and the promotion of international relationships. This gave an impetus to French thought, while association and contact with other lands and other forms of life affected the general consciousness.

Second. There had been established through the untiring efforts of Richelieu, Mazarin, and their collaborators a respect for arts and letters, science and commerce, which touched the remotest parts of the kingdom, and gradually admiration for the arts became the fashion,



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developing almost to a mania, particularly among the upper classes and the court.

Third. Conscious effort appears to have been divorced from religious idealism and concentrated on social evolution, which became the dominating impulse of the rapidly developing nation.

Fourth. The early isolation of the court at Versailles and the gradual magnetic influence it exerted over the beauty, talent and money of the realm, hastened the development of forms of social etiquette, ceremonial observance and pageantry which established the social criteria for the world at large.

Fifth. Through the Edict of Nantes, France was flooded by hordes of Flemish and Dutch Huguenots who were artists and craftsmen, working in all materials, ready to do the bidding of any court personage whose whim and resources permitted creation in any field. This variety of craftsmen, the excellence of their work, and the wealth of material at their command aided no little the growth and maturity of this entirely new French period art expression.

Sixth. It must be remembered that Francis I established an entirely different social domestic ideal. It has been said before that the art of France is an art pre-eminently for women. In no periods is this so clearly felt as in the periods of Louis XIV, Louis XV and Louis XVI. While in scale, in colour and design much of the period of Louis XIV is masculine in its feeling, the style itself and the variety of its forms is no doubt very largely influenced by the female favourites of the monarch.

During the ascendancy of Madame de Montespan the period reaches its highest form of development. The

qualities of the woman—her indomitable will, her love of show, her vanity and pride, with the refinement and culture which she undoubtedly possessed—are all clearly seen in every object supplied the court during the years of her most absolute sway, not alone over Louis himself, but over all those who through her influence expected and received favours. La Vallière, with less force, therefore less power, made far less impress than did de Montespan; while Madame de Maintenon, whose life was given to service and to the outward regeneration of the court, has left an indelible impression of heaviness, formality, lack of grace and an entire absence of the playful charm which the High period expresses in so notable a degree.

The important fact to be retained is that the art of Louis XIV is dominated by female influence, and that this influence, increasing, finds its climax of perfection in the following reign, when Louis XV expresses it most completely.

There is still another condition which has no little bearing on the remarkable crystallization of the style of Louis XIV. This is the period of absolutism in which the monarch declared himself the church and the state. All impulses bent to the one, the aggrandizement of self and the promulgation in no uncertain terms of the absolute monarchical ideal. This in no little measure is the reason for the gradual disappearance of the influences of the Italian Renaissance, the Saracenic invasion, which came through Spain, and of the Teutonic motif. It resulted in the ultimate crystallization of a united French form of expression.

Perhaps an examination into the effects of these

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influences will serve to establish a mental connection which will give the period of Louis XIV a place in the decorative idea.

First of all, this new concentrated social ideal developed the most magnificent and ornate display of modern times. The wealth of material, its luxurious combinations and its military effects, have been the admiration of the unthinking from that day to this. Again, the whole palace at Versailles, with its walls, its ceilings, its accessory objects, formed a vast stage setting for the most extravagant pageants in court life that history records. The thought of the palaces as a suitable background against which to show furniture or people was furthest from the Louis XIV idea. The palace produced a scenic effect into which the most gorgeous costumes, the most subtle, and still pretentious, manners and customs, the most ornate and unrelated forms, were constantly to be seen moving to and fro. Consequently the result must be overdone, heavy, mixed and whimsical, so far as its applications to real life are concerned.

To be sure, there was good and bad in the materials used, in the designs prepared, in the technique of the work done and in the caprices that inspired it. But the aggregate of these things produced a mixed effect beyond ordinary comprehension, and too involved to be a part of anything except the most luxurious, richest and most presuming of all possible interior expression. Even then it must be readapted, refined and worked out by the most artistic hands in order to make it appear as anything else than a grand ballroom or hotel dining-room when seen as a full blaze of glory.

It is important that we should not confuse the architecture with the interior furnishings and decorations of the period called Louis XIV. Let us remember that there were two sets of ideas seeking prevalence in France. The classic idea, with all that it expresses in temperance, simplicity, consistency and sincerity, was still revered, taught and practised by a certain class of persons of education, men of letters and of the arts, while directly opposed to it was the extravagant exposition of the most radical humanistic tendencies. This accounts, in the main, for the two types of literature then prevalent and for the development of classic exterior architecture. This phase is represented by the façade of the Louvre, of Versailles, and kindred buildings of this period. These forms of French architecture more nearly expressed the Italian spirit and are more readily adapted to modern conditions than are any of the French periods, with the possible exception of the late Louis XV, when the classic impulse tended toward refinement and a reduction in scale, so that it produced the historic gem, the Little Trianon.

It is interesting to see how this classic idea, which found its reincarnation in architecture so wonderfully wrought, failed to make any decided impress on either the architecture of the interior or the objects used in its furnishing. It is true that classic decorative motifs appear in the period of Louis XIV, but so changed are they and in general so submerged in other decorative forms that they count for little, and the letter rather than the spirit is perceived.

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The decorative motifs may be classed under three distinct heads:

There are the classic motifs egg-and-dart, astragal and dentil—remade in form, readapted in scale, and used as borders and mouldings to give place and form to the other types with which they are always used.

Then there is the shell, which shows rapid changes from the well-formed shell of the early days to the parted motif which in the end became the rococo or rocaille so familiar in this and the following period.

From the Italian scroll, filtered through Flemish usage and adapted by the French, comes the form which is really the controlling one in the decorative expression of the entire period. The naturalistic or humanistic influence, which never conventionalizes or considers materials, was introduced in flower, animal and human form, representing as nearly as possible that for which each object stands in nature.

The combination of these three types of motif form what is known as the Louis XIV motif style. These motifs are arranged in bisymmetric form, mingled and commingled, whether carved, cast, chiselled, or painted, so as to produce certain qualities in appearance for which the period is valuable to us, and which we may use in adapted form

It will be seen here that there is no relationship established between the room as a background and furniture, decorative objects, persons and the other important things. Remember that the scenic effect of the thing itself is the idea for which the thing exists, rather than as a suitable background effect against



which rarer and more important things may be properly exploited. Neither is there a thought in this grand period of restfulness, quietness, unassuming refinement and sincerity of expression which marks the more classic periods. It is these qualities of which we in this generation are so greatly in need.

The furniture of this period expresses two remarkably opposed ideas. In structure it is rectangular and formal, huge in scale, mixed in material. Its decorations and sometimes its upholstery appear as informal motifs, non-structurally treated, playfully arranged, and often so mixed and intermixed that the story of their application to a structural form becomes untranslatable, and one abandons the whole as a maze through which he is unable to direct his thought.

The study of the period shows the colour to be, in the early part, a readaptation of the colours of the High Renaissance in Italy. Dark red, old gold, dark green and dark blue predominate. These tones are below middle value, the textiles are rather simple, Italian motifs dominating and simplicity being the key idea. As the period progresses these colours became a little lighter, more mixed and, finally, toward the latter part of the period, more naturalistic in their motif with a larger number of colours used in each design.

Our object in looking into these influences and their results has been to awaken the reader, first, to the fact that there is a direct relationship of cause and effect between the ideal dominant in the public mind and the art expression which is the result of needs arising from this state of consciousness. Again, it

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has been the aim to lead the reader to see that national feeling is the expression of a national idea and that, while it expresses perfectly that idea, it may be, and probably is, useless when employed to express any other idea if copied in its original form and manner.

It is also important to know that, while all this is true, certain elements, structural facts, decorative motifs, colour combinations, furniture and ornament creations may be in themselves beautiful. If they are so, and their design qualities are realized, each and all of these are possible elements for use in expressing a new set of ideas. It is to prevent the mistake of believing that a Louis XIV room should be reproduced under modern conditions that this viewpoint has been given. We must see it as the expression of clear-cut qualities of the life which gave it birth.

The first quality of this period may be said to be that of military formality. The monarch himself, though but five feet two inches tall, is always spoken of and thought of as expressing a high type of military dignity and precision. This quality is reflected in the entire art of the period. It is heavy and dominant in its scale; it is a scenic panorama of mixed motifs with diversified treatments, gradually becoming amalgamated into one general feeling of structural and French adaptation. This military, formal, dominating manner unites with it as time goes on a growing refinement of detail in single objects which is almost lost in the dazzling brilliancy with which each thing or detail is forced to become an associate element.

The adaptation of the period of Louis XIV must

be made to rooms in which the qualities just discussed are the ones to be brought out in the decoration, but the period itself is far less valuable for present use than it is as a key to the understanding of the two periods immediately following it.

## PART II

## CHAPTER IX

### THE REGENCY AND THE PERIODS OF LOUIS XV AND XVI

THE regency, which is the period of transition between the styles of Louis XIV and Louis XV, gave, through the character and activities of the Regent and his court, an added impetus to the forces inaugurated by Louis XIV. By a less thoroughly organized political system, a more flagrant disregard of the rights and customs of social relations, and by an open opposition to ethical and religious influences, this period prepared the minds of the people of France for the period of Louis XV, to which it may be said to be the logical preface.

The great tax system of Louis XIV had so depleted the public treasury and exhausted the resources of the people at large that supplies for the maintenance of the ceremonial which characterized this monarch's reign could not be obtained under existing conditions. Energy was devoted to securing ready money rather than the installation of a system which should gradually supply future needs. The social questions became a matter of open court gossip. Manners and customs, heretofore regarded as somewhat private in their nature, were openly paraded as a natural and logical method of living. Writers and social dignitaries openly scorned ethical forms and religious customs which had hitherto received

consideration at least as matters of outward observance.

The excesses of the Regent and his intimates were of few years duration, but they established a precedent which worked out in the period of Louis XV into a well-defined manner of living. Less public money to spend meant, of course, less material for creative purposes. This resulted in a less gorgeous display on a less ponderous scale in useful and decorative objects.

A less clearly defined outward appearance of decency gave great liberty to the already overwrought imaginations of the people of the court and the artists and craftsmen who created for them. A stronger and more firmly felt female domination reduced the art expression in amount of material, in scale, in variety of form and in colour choice. A less formal, less dignified and less heavy structure also resulted and a decorative arrangement which bespoke the whims and caprices of the intelligent, sometimes refined, but extravagant ideas of the dominating influence.

The most radical change in this period is seen in the growing popularity of the Flemish curve and the cabriole leg which had already been more or less exploited through the Huguenot influence from Flanders and England. The cabriole leg became the usual support in chairs, divans and sometimes in consoles. This selection made essential the choice of curved lines to represent the structural limitations of these articles of furniture. In harmony with this idea the curved treatment of the Flemish scroll and the already popular rococo motif appear in carved wood, sometimes in composition, and not infrequently in metal ornament.



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Textile and ornament received their share of playful exploitation. Colour choice was lighter in value, intense and lavishly mixed in hue. Ornamental pieces in pottery and metal were designed, and sold when possible, regardless of their consistency with the furnishing objects to be associated with them.

The style can scarcely be said to be of sufficient importance to receive special treatment except as it gives a prefatory insight into those phases of life which so greatly influenced the art of Louis XV. It also gives the origin and reason for the seeming return in furniture construction to curved-line feeling, cabriole support and a finer scale than that which expressed the art form of Le Grand Monarque and his gorgeous court.

The period of Louis XV from 1715 to 1774 marks the high tide of the French decorative styles. This is the climax of a materialistic ideal, the full flower of all those Renaissance tendencies established by Francis I and so strongly intrenched by Louis XIV. It shows the effect of two centuries of development in which the social ideal is preëminent, and luxury, sensuous pleasure and personal gratification are the avowed ideals of life. It reaps a full harvest of all the ills attendant in the train of such ideals, but it develops in their evolution and maturity conscious, sensuous beauty of form, line, material and colour, and a delicacy of technique with a refined unified expression never equalled before or since in any period art expression of a social type.

This period stands without challenge as the most sensuously beautiful, subtly refined and masterly handled of any period upon which a people has unconsciously impressed its type of the social domestic ideal.

Because this is so, the period of Louis XV is of inestimable value in working out our national and personal problems wherever our ideals touch this great era of art which was devoted to sensuous beauty.

The forces or impulses which actuated the period of the regency were, though at first not outwardly prominent, the keystone upon which this period is built. The monarch himself—in early life reticent, delicate and magnetic—was a great personal favourite with all who knew him. By his charm of manner he revived the flagging interests of the tired court, reinspired the ministers of state, and recreated, by modifying the methods of Louis XIV, a new French ideal. In his time the court was no longer a magnificent, ponderous and scenic show, but a collection of favoured persons, born to luxury and enjoyment, to whom pleasure was the key to life's highest attainment, while isolation and mystic solitude in the conduct of court affairs silenced public clamour.

Gradually the favourites of Louis XV gained over him such power that the appointment of ministers, their dismissal, the granting of pensions, distribution of public expenditures and court etiquette were almost entirely in their hands. With the ascendancy of Madame de Pompadour these influences reached their zenith of strength. Although others took her place in the fickle attentions of the king, she never lost her hold on this dominating personality, but continued to control not only the laws but the customs and finances of France. Clever to the last degree, she not only bent her energies to hold this influence and use it for the exaltation and satisfaction of her friends and herself, but she even used the weaknesses of the king as an excuse for the profligate

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expenditure of money to satisfy the whims of other ladies less fortunate than she.

The influence of all this on the art expression of the time was tremendous. It resulted in constant changes in decorative style, and these changes were made upon the already developed backgrounds of Louis XIV and the regency. Some new buildings were erected, and these, like those of the preceding reigns, still show the strongly entrenched classic influence in the architectural field.

The interiors were a modification of the previous styles with the elimination of the classic idea and the fullest development of the humanistic, naturalistic, rocaille idea inaugurated by the regency. Such rooms seldom present a background sufficiently obscure or plain to connect in the best way with the furniture and furnishings for which they should have been designed.

This statement in no way challenges the beauty of some of the walls and ceilings of this period. Rather it is intended to convey the idea that the panelled arrangements and the decorative ornament each in itself is often exquisitely beautiful in composition and decorative effect, but they are not, unless greatly simplified in amount, in colour and in arrangement, suited to our problem of a background against which modern people in modern clothes and with modern manners are to appear.

One more important step in the evolution of the background is the simpler way in which the walls were panelled, the treatment of ornament within these panels often leaving a restful blank space in the centre, and the general structural placing of this ornament although curve lined in its nature and general feeling.

This period is further characterized by the total elimination of the classic motif. It seems quite impossible to believe that the building of the Great Trianon, the Church of the Madeleine, and the beginning of the Little Trianon with its classic meaning should show nothing in the interior decorative idea that seemed wholly related to them. Not only are the motifs absent but the general feeling which they would insure is lost in the exploitation of the rocaille and the naturalistic motif. These motifs always appear in the non-bisymmetric arrangement, which in truth is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the period of Louis XV. The marvellous way in which the occult balance of motifs is worked out in each field of expression is the key often for distinguishing the Louis XV from the Louis XVI motif treatment.

Furniture followed quite closely the structural tendencies of the regency just preceding. It became smaller in scale, still more graceful and sensuous, was expressed in more materials, and ranged widely from very much decorated to very little decorated structural effects. Chairs, divans, consoles and even cabinets and other articles, are made in natural walnut, beautifully shaped, exquisitely carved and sometimes upholstered in tapestry whose texture, motif and colour express the same general feeling as that of the natural wood.

One can hardly conceive wooden chairs of this period covered with fragile taffeta or a finely felt brocade whose texture and colour relate them to quite another type of this period style. It is the natural companion of the other type which is either gilded or enamelled in old ivory or beautiful grays. This treatment has the effect



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of refining them and giving them a genuinely feminized appearance. The same qualities are often found in a scale still further reduced where the chairs are fitted only for a drawing-room or a woman's boudoir.

The wide range of materials in which furniture is made is of great assistance in the choice and use of this style in modern composition. Another treatment of wood in side pieces is found in lacquer and the application of a metal ornament. This combination of wood lacquer and metal would seem most incongruous. In other periods it would be so; but in the period of Louis XV powerful technique with a perfect conception of balanced relationships made it possible to use even incongruous materials and sometimes incongruous motifs. The result was, sometimes, a most appealing article, which, by virtue of these qualities, appeared to be a unit when completed. It would be dangerous, however, in most cases, to accept as possible the combinations in decorative materials used in the period of Louis XV.

For the motifs themselves much may be said. To understand the feeling produced by the union of the ideas which these motifs exemplified one must bear in mind the development of the rocaille unit with all sorts of modifications and in all kinds of combinations. It seems incredible that the shell or rock shell motif could be combined with the Flemish scroll, and not only express an unlimited number of subtle and sensuous designs but also that these decorative designs should finally take the place of the very structure itself. So prodigally was this idea developed, and so lavishly was the decorative quality applied, that in many pieces, particularly in consoles, the motif be-





A BEAUTIFUL ROOM IN THE PERIOD OF LOUIS XV, IN WHICH THE WALLS SEEK TO EXPRESS THE DECORATIVE IDEA RATHER THAN THE FURNITURE AND FITTINGS. THE QUALITIES OF LOUIS XV IN LINE, FORM AND ORNAMENT, ARE SHOWN IN A MOST REFINED WAY. STRENGTH IS GIVEN THROUGH THE USE OF WOOD PANELS.



came the structural fact and the supports were inadequate, insincere, inconsistent and wholly opposed to the idea of strength, fitness or structural form.

This fact shows that the intemperate or inordinate use of any decorative form, or of decorative forms in any combination, may lead even the most careful into a misconception of what decoration is, how it is to be used, and what its relation is to the structural idea. Where fitness to use is the first consideration in any object made, structure must dominate decoration.

The second set of motifs may be called the naturalistic. All of the tendencies of the time led to an admiration for and cultivation of natural objects, particularly in gardens and grounds, which logically brought these things into use for decorative purposes. The influences, too, outside of France (the Oriental and the Decadent Italian) tended toward the representation of men, animals and flowers combined in one unit or one object in such a way that by suggestion the result was either nauseating, grotesque, or beautifully fantastic, according to the skill of the artisan.

The period of Louis XIV embraced this naturalistic idea, and the period of Louis XV used it in the expression of the social ideals for which the period stood. Very natural gardens of flowers, very suggestive cupids, very naturalistic lords and ladies and very intimate ceremonies were combined with the rocaille motifs, particularly in tapestries, paintings and the decorations of pottery.

Even on fans, snuff boxes, buttons and other small articles are found, handled in the most extraordinary

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and delicate manner, naturalistic pictures whose charm lies in the delicacy of their treatment, the exquisite garments which are represented and the spirit of the time which they so clearly reflect. When examined from the standpoint of decoration, they of course lack the fundamental qualities of the decorative idea, except as it appears, in this extraordinary period, to be in harmony with the other modes of expression.

In colour the period of Louis XV presents a considerable range of choice. In tapestries the backgrounds are light and are worked with the idea of background effect. Upon these appear various human incidents, flower forms and other motifs in a pictorial way. The general effect is not very dark or very light, but somewhere around middle value. The period, however, is more generally expressed in brocades of gorgeous colours and wondrous weaves, and in taffeta and damask whose quality and texture bespeak the same refined and extravagant sense. A printed linen was also made, which, when contrasted with the same material in England, gives one a keen sense and appreciation of the qualities in this period of Louis XV. These, like tapestries, seem to present a value a little above or a little below middle, never strong and rugged, seldom weak and insipid.

The hues of colours used are inexhaustible. It is the French period for the development of colours. There seems to be the widest range of colour choice of any period in France, and probably of any period of human expression. This is due probably to extravagance in all fields, to the desire of each person to outdo his neighbour, and to the fact that nature, to be at all ade-

quately expressed, requires the whole range of the colour spectrum.

The colours of this period are quite intense and have a life and sparkle which is softened wonderfully by time and sometimes by the combinations of the colours themselves. A certain vitality and imaginative effect is presented which make textiles of this period particularly interesting to study.

Much, very much, might be said of the development of smaller decorative articles. Their name is legion, their varieties innumerable; but they, one and all, seem to owe their existence to the same underlying ideas, and each undoubtedly expresses as nearly as possible the answer to a demand. This is what every art object in every period does if it submits to the influence of the period.

In summing up this period of Louis XV it is perhaps sufficient to say this is the social period of French art in which two centuries of national life find their full flower in an art expression which combines the weakness and the strength of the system which it represents. When seen purely from an artistic standpoint, no period in France, and few in history, contribute so clearly defined an elemental force for design and composition; few periods are less suited to modern use except through adaptation, and few in selective quality are so little understood.

This, too, is a style in which the power of keen discrimination is the key to successful use. This discrimination must come not from the acceptance of all things in the period of Louis XV as good, but from a most intimate knowledge of what is being expressed



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and how it has been done. One must never fail to reckon with the forms, the scale, the material and the colour, in their various combinations as they relate to the æsthetic ideal. He must compute their value and, knowing his own problem, use with the utmost discretion these subtle forces to express subtle ideas. These ideas are generally out of place when seen in huge groups or entirely by themselves, but, when commingled and interrelated with others, may form one of the most pleasing of all period suggestions.

The period of Louis XVI, from 1774 to 1793, perhaps developed its fundamental idea more radically than any other in so short a time. During the period of Louis XIV two fundamental impulses or strains of domination are clearly defined, namely: the classic and the naturalistic. These were fused into a unit in which the latter is prominent in the decorative scheme and the former in the architectural idea. The period of Louis XV expresses the culmination, decline and extinction of this idea as used for merely sensuous exploitation.

The period of Louis XVI stands for the fall of this ideal and the restoration of the classic to first place in the decorative field, which was the place it always had held in French architecture. At the death of Louis XV the people of the French court were surfeited and debauched by pleasure, and their very nature cried out for rest and change. The finances of the country were drained by reckless extravagance while money for increased splendour was not forthcoming. The people were in no frame of mind to submit to further taxation or to continue the old methods of supplying



SKETCH FOR A MODERN DRAWING-ROOM WHOSE BACKGROUND TREATMENT AND CAREFULLY SELECTED FURNISHINGS CREATE A CHARMING UNITY IN THE USE OF LOUIS XV AND XVI STYLES.



the royal treasury. Dissatisfaction was rampant not only in Paris but in the outlying communities, and murmurs of revolt were not infrequent before the accession of Louis XVI.

The new king came to the throne under the most trying circumstances in any period of history. He was simple, reticent and retiring, with no initiative and no taste for extremes in anything. The strong will, the brilliant mind and the resourcefulness of Louis XIV might have balanced the ship of state for a time at least, but Louis XVI, with little insight into national conditions, was totally unfitted for the task of reëstablishing a safe basis for his government. The new queen, Marie Antoinette, brought up in the strict Austrian court, simple, childish, exuberant, frivolous in nature, shrank intuitively from all that the life at Versailles expressed. She began her life a mere child in France, and when called to the throne was nothing more than a child in aims, desires and experience.

It is astonishing that the development of this period was so rapid, and I do not hesitate to believe that she played a more important part in its development than any other one person, and that the influences which she championed were responsible in a great degree for the majority of the changes wrought. Very early, and very positively, she withdrew herself and her suite from the deceits and inconsistencies of the palace to the Little Trianon, and proceeded to build around her a different life from that instituted by the traditions of the palace. Her almost childish love of sports, her strong, inherent desire for simple things, combined with a childish disregard of money values and a desire

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to take a democratic part in everything she saw, led to some indiscretions, which I believe were frequently interpreted falsely.

Not only was her personal influence thrown to the side of classicism, but she sought to surround herself with those persons whose ideals were of a nature similar to her own. Mingled with this classic idea is the girl-ish, playful, buoyant, animal life which must express itself even under classic restrictions.

Some of the results of this period are too far reaching to be ignored. The withdrawal of the queen and her suite to the Little Trianon was the first great step in the return to a domestic ideal. The palace at Versailles was a theatre and a showground during the reign of Louis XIV and Louis XV. In the Little Trianon refined and sane human beings might well live surrounded by those beautiful things which were in harmony with the house. The treatment of the walls and ceilings, not to mention the chimney pieces, eloquently confirms the truth of this statement. Few architects, interior decorators, or even artists recognize the importance of the treatment of walls and ceilings, not to mention chimney pieces.

A great change was made in the restoration of the room, its walls, floor and ceiling, to the background idea. No one can see the intimate rooms of Marie Antoinette without feeling keenly the struggle that must have ensued before the beautifully spaced, finely panelled and sensibly decorated walls could have supplanted the gorgeous ponderous collection of trash of which the palace at Versailles is a constant reminder.

Furniture in this period, when the wall was established



as a background, returned to rectangular or partially rectangular structure; the supports were vertical, the cabriole leg disappeared, the contour was curved and straight, or sometimes well spaced straight, the proportions dignified though tiny, consistent, though at times a little dramatic. As to the number and importance of articles, there was no great change from the previous period. They were also produced in natural wood, coloured and enamelled, with enamel, perhaps, in the ascendancy. One can less easily conceive this style in natural wood, yet a room in which all enamelled furniture is used is often tiresome and uninteresting, and the discreet use in this period of walnut, enamel and colour, in the same room was too exquisite to be passed without comment. To know when and how much of each of these to use is to be conscious of the two influences of the period, and also to understand artistic requirement in composition where variety is to be considered.

The ornament was classic, strongly so, in that it was applied structurally, and many of the classic motifs retained their original fine proportions. The whole treatment, however, was in a scale so entirely foreign to the original classic idea that one can scarcely make a comparison. The lighter side of the influence expressed itself in garlands of flowers, delightful little cherubs, love birds, bow and arrows, love knots and the like, all of which, expressing the clean, human, childish qualities of the queen, constituted the ruling idea.

To grasp in its entirety the wonderful change, one needs to study comparatively the painted surfaces of this and the last period, the treatment of flowers, garlands, cherubs, human figures, etc., and judge for him-

self the qualities of mind which brought out each of the two types of feeling and expression in these artistic fields. Verily, classic domination and a clean idea has wrought wonders!

Textiles presented a wide field of expression. Motifs were smaller, colours less mixed; floral patterns became bisymmetric, as in fact did most other ornament. Things seemed to right themselves by the law of gravitation and to assume at least a miniature appearance of dignity. While inconsistencies existed at times between the scale of ornament in textiles and the furniture with which it was used, there was plenty of room in this period for selection of things in perfect harmony in motif, in scale, in material and in colour. This selective quality in combination, as has been so often said, is the key to the true expression of the period of Louis XVI. If there is an excess in this period, it is found oftenest in the use of decorative ornamental bric-a-brac. Undoubtedly much of this could have been dispensed with, but the wonder is that so much was left out and not that more might have been. If we can eliminate in the same ratio unnecessary and inappropriate things, to-day our houses may become not only modest, but expressive of a taste scarcely equalled in any age.

To summarize: the period of Louis XVI is the restoration of sanity in French expression. It is the redomination of the classic ideal. This ideal is expressed, to be sure, in a somewhat dramatic, childish, miniature picture form, but the element is there nevertheless. It marks the beginning of an understanding of the relation between the walls, ceiling and floor and the furnishings of a house, and also of the relation between a house and

the individuality of the one who must live in it and whose personality is to be expressed by it. Its adaptation to modern usage is too apparent to need further remark.

It is not essential to speak just now in detail of the periods of the Directory, the Restoration, the Constitution, nor the Empire. The Empire is the most interesting and far reaching in its influence of these, but for our purposes in treating the French styles, its elements are non-essential. It has been the aim in treating of these styles in a limited manner to select causes, examine their effects, define their qualities, and indicate their forces for use in modern life.

## PART II

## CHAPTER X

### THE TUDOR PERIOD—THE ENGLISH STYLES

AS it was in France so was it in England. The Renaissance was an affected style. This was also true of the Gothic in England, although the Gothic was indigenous to France. The Renaissance was a natural outcome of geographical position and of social evolution in Italy. The English adopted the Renaissance as a new and interesting means of expressing national ideas. They adopted the forms rather than the ideas for which they stood, and, as is always the case, these forms were at first copied, and later modified, into what may be styled the English expression of Italian ideas. The development of these forms in England, however, was considerable, although neither so complete nor so distinctive as those in France under the inspiration of Francis I.

In order to make a simple comparison between these two national types that we may the more clearly understand the fundamental qualities of the English form, it is well to consider first some of the elements concerned in their development.

In the first place, the life of the people of any country is the greatest factor in the evolution of its art. It is their daily activities that determine the needs of the time, and these needs are satisfied by the normal pro-

duction of such objects as are essential. These objects accordingly represent the art of the nation.

Up to the last quarter of the fifteenth century the English people may be said to have developed rugged, solid, individual but primitive expressions of their social ideal. This is partly due to the geographical isolation of Great Britain. By its position it is cut off from other types of life with which it might have, under different circumstances, commingled. It is also due, in part, to the fact that the national mind had given its attention to political rather than social development. But, most of all, it may be attributed to the mixed qualities which we call the English temperament. Perhaps we can perceive something of this temperamental aggregate by noticing for a moment the strains of influence which are fused together in the comprehensive term "the British nation."

This people is Celtic in origin, and while perhaps little of the Celtic quality remains in England, much of the feeling is still present in the quality of the Irish mind, and no doubt hereditary strains are clearly traceable to this origin even in the English. Before the beginning of the Christian era the Romans had invaded the British Islands. By the beginning of the fourth century England was practically under their domination, and to this day appear ineradicable marks of the power of that mighty nation.

The early Britons mingled with and absorbed many of the Roman traditions, particularly in political and social life, which remain as mountain-top traits in English modern life. In the first place, English law is based somewhat upon Roman law. Much of jurisprudence,



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political organization, and desire for territorial expansion, as well as substantial, formal, warlike measures, are of Roman origin. These elemental factors have produced qualities of solidity, strength, formality, conservatism and fearlessness, which are fundamentals in the English character and are clearly discernible in their art.

Before the eighth century Roman power had gradually declined, and the invasion of the Anglo-Saxons with their traditions of somewhat barbaric domesticity brought into the language, social forms and domestic relationships, the Teutonic qualities which are perceptible in the domestic ideals of English life. The amalgamation of the Anglo-Saxons and the added domestic ideas of the Danes furnished a remarkable complement to the formal imperialism of the Roman time.

The tendency toward democratic equality, the inclination for comfort and moderation, and the distinctly non-monarchic viewpoint of these Anglo-Saxon invaders were also strong factors in the rapid development of the home idea in England after the beginning of the eighth century. But this was interrupted and greatly modified by the invasion of the Norman French under William the Conqueror about the middle of the eleventh century. Very different was this ideal from the crude democratic social ideal of the two previous centuries. With William the Conqueror came the feudal system, with all its military power, caste system and monarchic principles. He laid the foundation for the absolute monarchy which reached its height under Henry VIII at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Brief mention of these different races has been made here to stimulate an inquiry regarding the different

phases of the English periods in order that it may be kept in mind that the British people are the most mixed, comprehensive and varied in experience of all nations. In consequence of this complexity, they have perhaps more ideas to express and less definitely formulated traditions in one style of expression. Their ideas have been less thoroughly worked out than those of nations which have had one ideal from time immemorial, and have expressed it in traditional forms that grew more and more insistent until the climax was reached, when decadence set in and resulted in the destruction of the original idea.

The second factor which has influenced in a large degree English art expression is their peculiar political viewpoint. In no country has there been so decided a conflict between supreme monarchic power and democratic ideals as in the national history of this remarkable people. One has only to remember the Magna Charta and the steps which led to it, all that followed its acceptance, the climax of absolutism under Henry VIII, the peculiar strategic ideal of Elizabeth, the ups and downs of the Stuart dynasty, the peculiar outcome of the Dutch régime under William and Mary, the vicissitudes of the Georges, and the remarkable constitutional monarchy under Victoria, to see how difficult it is to consider the English periods as expressing monarchic ideas alone. In France the period of Francis I or Louis XIV or Louis XV was dominated supremely by the monarch and his associates. The corresponding English periods, while somewhat under the direction of the monarch, owed their origin to national ideas rather than to monarchic whims.

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The third factor which has played no small part in the development of the people is their attitude to the Christian religion, which was generally embraced by the beginning of the fifteenth century. The English Church, though Roman in its origin, was always less clearly identified with the general movement than were those of the continent. By the last days of the fifteenth century, when Henry VII had completed the chapel in Westminster Abbey, the Gothic influence had spent its force, and already the secular in life was making itself felt. This period in England corresponds to that of Louis XII in France. The English up to this time had less contact with Italy and other continental countries than had France, and had developed a very crude type of interior architecture and domestic furnishing. The houses were mostly made of wood and during the reign of Henry VII became picturesque to a degree.

While we must ignore architecture in its exterior forms in this book, a general feeling for the "Englishman's home as his castle" will be found in the middle and upper class house of the period just named. The furnishings, it is true, were crude and consisted mainly of a Gothic chest, a roughly finished oak table, a possible bread and cheese cupboard and primitive benches. Unlike those of the same period in France, they were lacking in structural niceties and subtle decorative Gothic ornament.

The home idea, however, was innate and the head of the family supreme, while the individual rights of the family were jealously maintained. The days of Henry VIII and the establishment of the English

Church in its present form, with the king as the hereditary head, the constant conflict between the mother church and the reformed faith, the dissensions and separations consequent upon this conflict, are too well known to require more than a passing word. The type of religion or religious form which prevailed influenced greatly the art of the time and, sometimes, dominated its style.

With these four great influences in mind, and with a mental picture of the English people, one is fitted, with the aid of imagination, to understand the meaning of the Renaissance in England.

The art periods may be summarized as follows:

The Tudor period from about 1500 to 1603.

The Stuart period from 1603 to 1688.

The Dutch influence from 1688 to 1750.

The Individual period from 1750 to 1837.

The Victorian period from 1837 to 1900.

The New Renaissance from 1900 to the present day.

For our purposes the Tudor period may be divided into two parts—that of Henry VIII, who came to the throne in 1509 and died in 1547, and that of Elizabeth, extending from the time she came to the throne in 1558 to her death in 1603.

The reigns of Mary Tudor and Edward VI made little impress on the period and need not be mentioned here. Sometimes writers have classed this entire period as Elizabethan, and have spoken of the Tudor as the period including the reigns of Henry VII and VIII. It seems to me, however, that a clearer idea may be obtained by looking at the Tudor period as the expression of two distinct types of ideas.

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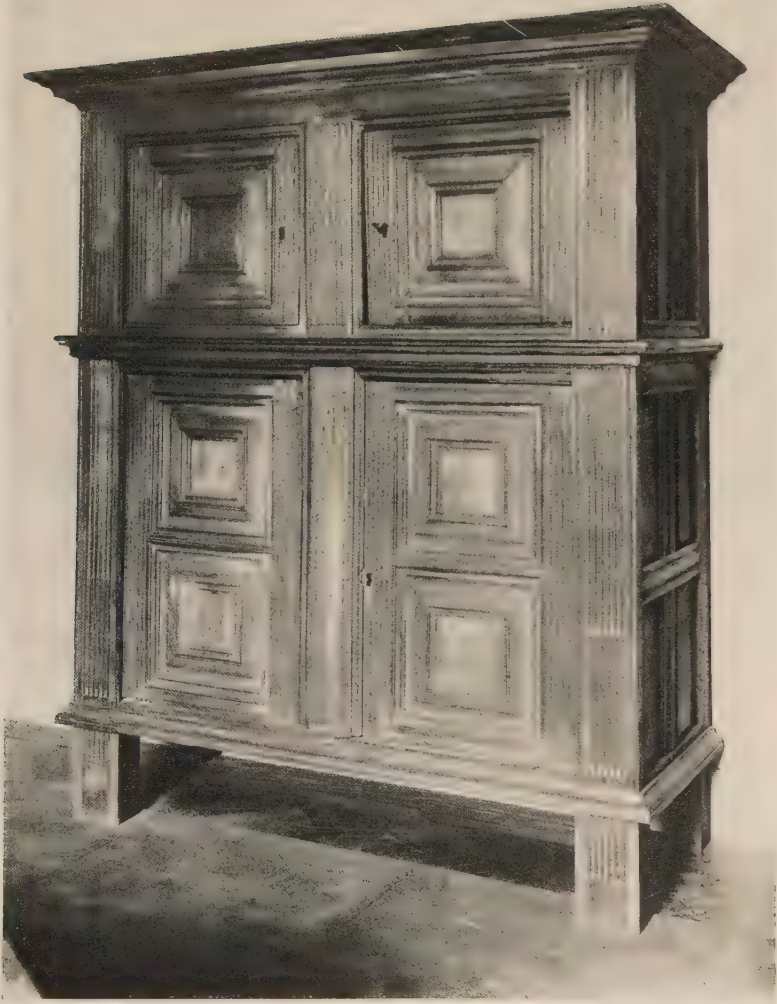
The reign of Henry VIII is characterized by some remarkable changes. The climax of absolute rule enabled the king and his ministers to dominate in a large measure the public mind, while the religious attitude of the country was so modified that the favourite of the king (his wife for the time being) had a great deal of influence on the development of the style. This new attitude in English court life to the domestic idea had a general bearing on the rapidity with which the style was evolved.

We must not spend time in discussing the phenomenal evolution of the English house, though a familiarity with its history will add greatly to one's appreciation of its furnishings and fittings.

With the establishment of the new English church form and with the domestic ideal determined by the king and his court, some fitting expression of these ideas would naturally be sought. Their attention was first turned to Italy. Italian furniture, textiles, ornament and even the artists themselves were brought into England. These arrivals increased with the ascendancy of Anne Boleyn, and continued after she gave place to others. The style then prevailing may be said to be a modification of the Italian Renaissance without a proper conception of the interior as a setting for the requisite furnishings.

While Henry VIII and his reign are responsible for the Elizabethan period, its maturity is found in the days of Elizabeth herself, and for that reason we deal with the Elizabethan period as the culminating expression of what is known as the old English idea.





AN OLD ENGLISH CABINET WHOSE MATERIAL, SIZE AND STRUCTURE EXPRESS THE QUALITIES OF THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD; BUT WHOSE GENERAL PROPORTIONS OF FORM, PANELS, MOULDINGS AND LINES SUGGEST THE RESTRAINT, SIMPLICITY AND CONSISTENCY OF THE CLASSIC.



In the reign of Elizabeth interiors reached the stage of development in which the pointed Gothic hammer-beam roof with its modifications had given place to a flat modified Renaissance ceiling. The walls during this period were panelled in three or four distinct types of oak panelling, each an evolution from the other, each gradually dropping its carved Renaissance motifs and becoming flatter with fewer and less ornate mouldings. These old English panelled walls are radiantly expressive of the dignity and sober earnestness of the period itself. Some are beautifully arranged with pilasters whose faces are carved in Renaissance motifs. The cornices are equally beautiful, and ceilings are modifications of the Italian idea, generally in a remarkably sustained way. The chimney pieces are often large, elaborately carved and chiselled, running sometimes to the ceiling itself, and heavy with Renaissance ornament and other motifs.

The furniture is chiefly oak and is distinguished by its heavy scale, the beautiful soft tones of the wood, and by the awkward proportions of the structural features, particularly during the middle of this period. Perhaps the most distinguishing quality is the series of huge bulges in the legs of tables and in bed posts, and the ugly proportion of the Ionic capital as it was used with these bulges in the supports of tables, beds and on cabinets. The surfaces of these supports are a mass of carving, crudely wrought and often badly proportioned, but rich in general effect. They bespeak a desire to accomplish in English scale and feeling the same result that Francis I developed in working out the idea in the supports of the furniture in the period

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which he dominated. The difference in effect, however, is remarkable.

Articles of furniture were few in number even in the days of Elizabeth. Those most commonly found were the bread and cheese cupboard, which served for almost anything that was to be put out of sight, the huge oak table with its ponderous top and often badly proportioned legs, the crude bench which took the place of chairs at the table, the bed, wood canopied with huge bulbous posts, the wainscot chair, wood throughout, almost grotesque in its form and ornament, and various chests which naturally followed the Gothic chest of the period preceding.

Panelled walls at first were covered with huge tapestries, and the floor with rushes or a kind of straw to soften sound and make the room more comfortable. A little later, through the influence of the wonderful Holbein, portraits were developed which, in spirit and technique as well as in size and form, found a proper place over the chimney pieces and on the walls of these heavily panelled oak rooms to which they lent a needed richness.

In the early forms of the banquet hall with its Gothic vaulted ceiling, its huge tapestried walls, its floors strewn with rushes upon which the hunting dogs lay at the feet of their masters, heads of deer and other animals found a fairly suitable place upon the walls as they were hung amid the helmets, armour and hunting implements of the masters of the house. Picture, for a moment, this banquet hall and the zoölogical ornaments which seem a natural part of it, and then consider the inappropriateness of transferring this armour,

## THE TUDOR PERIOD—THE ENGLISH STYLES

these implements, and these deer heads to a modern, sixteen-by-eighteen Chippendale-furnished dining-room. Is it any wonder that there is need for the study of period art to see where the mistreatment of the traditions of bygone ages has brought us?

The textiles of this period are dark, rich tapestries, velvets and damasks. Rich indeed were they in the days of Henry VIII, while they were dark and formal in the days of Elizabeth. The remarkable harmony of the value relation between these and their surroundings explains the sombre impressiveness of the period known as the Elizabethan.

The application of the Elizabethan style may be suggested here. Its scale is magnificent and it lends itself naturally to exploitation in expensive country houses, and is also of use in working out a scheme for a man's room or for cafés in large hotels. It has unlimited possibilities for adaptation in the interior decoration and furnishing of theatres. American theatres have been largely a barbaric American expression of mixed French styles which mean nothing but glamour and ostentation and which serve no good purpose, since the auditorium of a theatre should be a background, keeping its place as such and giving the stage and the actors on it a chance for at least a part of the public attention.

This Elizabethan period with its panellings, its dark, rich colours, its soft and neutral combinations, its heavy and dignified scale, should appeal more strongly than any other to people of good taste as an expression of the function of a theatre auditorium in which the size will permit the English scale.



## PART II

## CHAPTER XI

### THE STUART PERIOD AND THE DUTCH INFLUENCE

THE Tudor period may justly be said to stand for the Renaissance in England, for the Stuart period (1603 to 1689) is the most distinctly national of any of the English periods. By the end of the Elizabethan period the Italian Renaissance influence had almost entirely disappeared. Such ideas and their forms as were still in use gave way rapidly under the new régime.

This period is sometimes styled the Jacobean, but the term is so broad because of the dissimilarity of the different parts in the period itself that it is unwise to think of it as describing any one particular phase of the three parts into which the period naturally divides itself. The reigns of James I and Charles I mark the first epoch, the Commonwealth the second, and the reigns of Charles II and James II the third. The names of these rulers are synonymous with certain ideals which are really the governing principles in the lives and activities of the time.

The sturdy, stalwart James I brought from Scotland those monarchic and religious differences which opened the way for the Puritan development and the resultant Puritan expression. Instead of pageant, glamour, show, display and noise, the period became

## THE STUART PERIOD

the expression of moderation, reserve, economic conservation and personal mortification. There was no longer a tendency to use more wood, more colour or more metal than were essential to express an idea. Both James I and Cromwell had other ways to spend the money at their command.

The people, particularly the Separatists, taught and practised the strictest self-restraint and decried loudly all symbolic, religious or social expression which in any way might lend colour to the so-called idolatrous practices of the time. Personal discomfort, a revolt against sensual beauty as sinful, and a crusade against unnecessary expenditure of money for personal gratification became the leading ideas of the time.

These tendencies culminated in the commonwealth, when all kinds of domestic objects became scant in their material and particularly uncomfortable in their construction. They were sparsely ornamented with the crudest kind of flat-faced carving and were, withal, calculated to satisfy only the absolute needs of man, disregarding entirely the æsthetic sense as well as bodily ease.

This period, marking the first and second expressions of the Jacobean style, furnished the foundation for the earliest Colonial forms in the United States. The people who fled to Holland and thence to Massachusetts retained the characteristics of the English of that time, as did also those who settled Jamestown and founded the Southern colonies during the seventeenth century. New England, more than any other part of the United States, expressed for years the frugal conservatism which so manifestly dominated the Jacobean period.

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The rapid growth of the Separatist party brought to England many Flemish workers who were also Protestants in their religious views. These brought with them two structural ideas which were adopted, perhaps in part because they were economical and also because they were new. The first of these is twisted wood, which is the dominating characteristic of chair and table supports during the period of Charles I and Cromwell. This appeared also in the days of James I, and was found in frequent use until the advent of William and Mary, but during the days of Charles and Cromwell it dominated all other styles of furniture support. The other element is known as the Flemish scroll. This scroll, which is the same that was introduced into France and used so much in the days of Henry IV, Louis XIII and Louis XIV, was in reality an Italian device which the Flemish had seized and adopted as a national form.

The Italian pieces, too, which came to England in the last days of the Elizabethan period no doubt influenced somewhat the adoption of this scroll idea. The period is characterized by the use and abuse of the scroll in the backs of chairs, their understrapping, the arms and in other parts of furniture. Sometimes these are restrained, well carried out and structurally more or less appropriate. At other times they are wild in their choice and arrangement, heavy, badly spaced and ungainly, as well as inartistic in their proportions and in relationship to the article in which they are found. The chairs of the early period are high backed, very straight, with a small wooden seat, and are uncomfortable withal. During the reign of James they were

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upholstered in leather, later in velvet and, occasionally, in tapestry. During the reign of Charles they became low in back, rather cubical in shape and broad in seat. The seat and arms were upholstered in velvet and even damask, as the tendency to a luxurious court life made itself felt in opposition to the strictly economical ideas of the religious party.

The rule of Cromwell, however, produced a reaction, and a strict return to wood for discomfort's sake was the law of the day. Chests were legion. These were of oak, often entirely covered in a flat-faced carving with leafage and modified Renaissance forms. They were crude, stiff and ugly, but interesting and somewhat attractive as expressing permanence and a primitive quality as untouched by the Renaissance idea and uncontaminated by French influence.

This period had a distinct individuality up to the time of the accession of Charles II. Except for the Flemish influence it may be said to be strictly the expression of the middle-class English home. So possible is it of reproduction that all sorts of modifications are already in use in this country and the department stores are alive with Jacobean furniture, even to Jacobean rocking chairs, which, by the way, are the last article of human use that should be made in Jacobean form. Gate-legged tables are popular and seem to express the same qualities as those described in chairs and other articles of furniture.

The interior was, during this period, still oak panelled, though elaborate mouldings and Renaissance carvings were entirely out of place. Beamed ceilings not only made their appearance, but were the dominating fea-

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ture of the Jacobean room as turned and twisted wood was of the furniture in it. The wood was mostly oak, dark and rich in colour. The textiles which were used, and those which ought to be, represented two types. Suffice it to say that the printed linens of the time, which were strongly contrasting in value, huge in pattern and scale, and scrawly in motion, though in some instances entirely out of feeling with the period, are the most characteristic of any textile. Velvets seemed too rich, except for the period of Charles II, leather too brutal and damasks out of the question. If either of the latter are used in an adaptation of this style, they should have inconspicuous patterns in rather small scale with fairly close values and a dull, unobtrusive finish.

The last part of this period, beginning with the reign of Charles II is, strictly speaking, though Jacobean, not an English art period. The sympathies of the monarch were French. He was French in ideal and practice as much as it was possible to be and maintain an apparent ascendancy over the English people. He adopted French manners and customs and was often in France, or had his workmen there, copying and adapting the ideas of Louis XIV. In a word, the period of Charles II may be said to be the Jacobean fused with the Louis XIV in a scale and colour combination and an ornament display that accorded with the intelligence and the practices of Charles II. The student of periods will find keen enjoyment in the history of Charles II and the development of interior art which was the expression of the demand of the day.

To see the Jacobean period as a whole or as the expression of one idea is quite impossible. It must be



considered as three distinct periods, with at least two distinct ideas—one the domination of all those qualities which are summed up in the word Puritan; the other, the readaptation of the qualities of Puritanism to a profligate court life with a Louis XIV period as the well-spring from which to draw material for this expression.

The period of James II does not count, and the domination of the ideas of Charles ends in the abdication of James II and the recall of Mary from the Netherlands with William, who was by birth and inheritance a democratic Dutch ruler and not an English king.

To attempt to show the Palladian influence on England or the wonderful effects brought about by Inigo Jones would be the work of a volume. The omission is perhaps excusable since our aim is only to sense, if possible, the spirit of the time to such a degree that the use of objects will not be entirely the result of ignorant choice.

## PART II

## CHAPTER XII

### THE DUTCH INFLUENCE, OR THE PERIOD OF QUEEN ANNE

AS one reviews the successive changes that have taken place in the art of furnishing in the English styles, it will generally be found that under normal conditions the evolution from one style to another has been gradual. The characteristics and distinguishing features of the old forms became weaker, and those of the new style grew stronger by degrees until the first were lost in, or supplanted by, the last.

This accounts in many periods for the mixed objects called transition pieces which are so troublesome to the student of period styles. To make these freak pieces special objects of study is detrimental to a general understanding of those qualities which make for distinctive period limitations. It is advisable, therefore, to consider first always types of periods at the full flower of their expression rather than in the forms of the pieces just described. In no phase of applied art is this transition more clearly distinguishable than in the styles in furniture.

The English periods are less distinctly traceable, one to the other, than those of any other country. This is due to the fact that British conservatism adopted ideas less easily, assimilated them more slowly, and

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more naturally evolved its own expressions as different ideas dominated the period.

The Elizabethan and Stuart periods differed radically in the idea which they expressed, but in some ways the characteristics were identical. For example, the furniture was principally oak, carved when ornamented at all, rectangular in structure, uncomfortable and architecturally structural in its detail. The change that came about with the advent of the present style was not overwhelmingly sudden, but it was sure. Before considering these radical changes we will look for a moment to the causes which brought about this revolution in the household idea.

It will be remembered that in 1688 James II abandoned the English throne for a more congenial life in France, and that his prerogative as king was assumed by one William the Stadtholder, whose reasons for succession were that he was a grandson of Charles I and also a son-in-law of James II, whose daughter, Mary, he had married. This man William, although the ruler of the democratic Netherlands, is said to have been a man who never knew when he was beaten, and he came to England with the avowed intention of becoming an absolute dictator, notwithstanding the fact that his queen had the stronger claim to supreme authority.

Life in the Netherlands at that time was pronouncedly domestic. The ideals and practices of the country differed so decidedly from those of England that the needs of the people had produced a domestic type of furnishing not concerned with court ceremonial, but suitable for middle-class life and ordinary household

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use. Dutch forms and Dutch treatment were more democratic and more varied than those found during the Tudor or the Stuart dynasties in England. With the coming of William and Mary came shiploads of Dutch furniture and furnishings, as well as hordes of Dutch court officials, artists and craftsmen. This Dutch invasion is the reason for the rapidly changing forms of this period style.

To be sure, not all the people of England accepted Dutch social standards, but gradually people of influence did so, and the rigid adherence of the court to the methods of the mother country finally resulted in placing the stamp of Dutch influence upon all things made. It followed that the period forms of the era which had passed were almost eradicated.

Religious toleration had become a sufficiently fixed policy to make the church of practically no moment in determining the style.

This period, then, is the Dutch Domestic period filtered through English experience, and results in what is known as the Queen Anne period; though, in fact, Queen Anne herself had no more to do with the period than did the king of the Congo tribes, except that her tendencies as a gardener and seamstress influenced somewhat the naturalistic motifs, particularly in printed linens and embroidered tapestries. The great vogue of these tapestries was the natural outgrowth of her attitude and that of the ladies of the court to needlework.

As has been said, the change in period forms was almost revolutionary. We must remember that up to this time rectangular forms and straight-lined con-

struction dominated the manufacture of English furniture. Flemish scrolls or curved forms were not used in construction in the Elizabethan period and only in a limited way in the Jacobean period. An occasional chair arm or back might suggest the curved line, but even this was dominated by straight ones. An important fact is that tables and chair legs were generally square or turned or twisted wood, generally straight. They were guilty of no shaping except in rare instances. The pediment and other classic structural motifs were unknown.

In short, curved-line construction appeared to be studiously avoided. How remarkable a change occurred in this respect with the advent of the Dutch influence! Formal, unrelenting sternness gave way before a more graceful shaping, as curves became the fashion. In Elizabethan days a chair could not be made comfortable no matter how much it was upholstered or cushioned, but in this new type the chair began to assume the lines which the human form demands for its comfort.

This idea alone is sufficient to mark a step forward in the development of furniture, though this development reached its culmination later. The proportions and quantities of material were lighter in the structure of the William and Mary period, but with Queen Anne the strength, size and scale increased again. In 1720 mahogany was introduced into England, and from then on it rapidly grew in favour until it well-nigh dominated the English expression and found its natural echo in our Colonial styles which have been so much admired and in some cases overrated.



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When these details are compared with the cold, formal and primitive expressions of the Jacobean, with the flagrantly vulgar types sometimes seen in the period of Louis XIV or the Decadent products of the late Italian Renaissance, the Queen Anne forms give us a sense of relief, and the Colonial seems a step into the light. But, when considered from the standpoint of artistic and significant form based on subtlety in proportion, scale and treatment, not all Colonial pieces are as beautiful as they are sometimes believed to be.

The early part of the period marked the evolution out of the Jacobean type. Its products are distinguished by a lighter, more aspiring quality, a grace and charm acquired through the use of cane in seats and backs of chairs, a freer interpretation of the Flemish scroll, a gradual shaping of the objects to the human figure and to their particular requirements. The wood was generally oak, birch or walnut, but when mahogany was introduced it rapidly took the place of all other woods, and by the end of the Queen Anne period almost held the field alone. The tremendous difference between the carved and turned treatment of the earlier types and the perfectly plain, flat, smooth surface of the mahogany period marks a variation worthy of notice.

The most radical change in structure is found in the national adoption of the cabriole leg and the curve of its construction as represented in the contour of various articles of furniture of the period. The cabriole leg, imported from the Netherlands, earlier from France, and still earlier from Italy, is the distinguishing characteristic not only of the Queen Anne

support, but it is also that of the early work of Chipendale.

One gains perhaps as clear a conception of the difference between the French and English feeling in their treatment of this element as in any other art form of historical significance. Compare the cabriole leg of the Queen Anne chair in scale, in sinuousness of curve, in beauty of proportion, in balance, with that of the ideal cabriole used in the period of Louis XV. The latter—characterized by grace, subtlety of balance and sinuousness of direction—expresses all the refinement and charm of the French idea. Often the former—heavy and clumsy in scale, ugly in proportion, mechanical in curve, heavy, thick-set and ordinary—gives a pretty sure key to a Queen Anne-Dutch-English feeling done in mahogany.

It is not intended to brand all Queen Anne furniture as possessing these qualities and no others, but to make a general statement which is true under most circumstances. Much of the inordinate family worship of old mahogany would be wiped out in our time if the old pieces which have been passed down to us as products of the Colonial period could be judged by the same standards by which we judge other things, and not by a standard in which sentimentality rules reason and intention.

To this period belongs not only the credit of having begun to see furniture as related to persons and things, but to it also belongs the credit of originating a great number of new objects to meet the domestic needs of the time. These new ideas found expression in interesting and useful tables of various sizes, secretaries

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and writing desks that were comfortable and possible; chairs, some to rest in, some in which to sit erect, others apparently for show. In short, the scope of furniture from the functional standpoint was greatly enlarged, particularly during the last half of the period under consideration.

Perhaps in no article was a greater play of fancy shown than in mirrors. Mirrors in the Jacobean period were non-essentials. Personal appearance during the first half of that period was not a matter for serious consideration. The period of Queen Anne seems to have found the same satisfaction in its grotesque mirror frames that it found in many of its grotesque textile motifs. Sometimes these mirrors were fairly plain excepting at the top, where a huge broken gable or a jig-sawed appearance was found quite ugly in its effect and unimportant in its function. I have no doubt that admiration for these ill-designed and too ornate mirror frames has been instrumental in clouding the vision as to what a picture frame really is for and as to which is the important thing—the frame or the picture. From both these standpoints the too elaborate working out of the mirror was a hindrance to the best understanding of an art expression when applied to these forms or related ones.

As has been intimated, printed linens and needlework tapestries were the vogue of the day. Attention was turned no doubt to the French salon with its poetry, music and social chat. The salon of Queen Anne was a sewing bee of tapestry needlework. An extraordinary amount of rather pleasing patterns in fairly well-related colours was developed, but a much

larger amount was not only bad in colour and design, but impossible of use with objects refined in themselves. This mania for needlework embroidery spread to the States, and our Colonial handbags, bookmarks, etc., are but the fruits of the reign of Queen Anne. And the "God Bless Our Homes" and "What Is Home Without a Mother" of the Victorian era were the last gasp of the same idea.

A word might be said in this connection about the room as a background for all these things. The work of Sir Christopher Wren is too well known in architecture to need comment. His influence was at its height. Furniture had accepted the pediment, the broken gable, and other architectural elements, not only as essentials, but as ornaments in cabinet making and furniture decoration. The Anglo-classic-Renaissance oak panelling of the Elizabethan period and the flat, almost hungry looking, adaptation of it in the Jacobean period were far too sombre and plain to harmonize with the new idea.

Under William and Mary the rooms were done in large wooden panels representing in their form and arrangement something of the periods of contemporary French styles. Windows, chimney pieces, doors, etc., were heavily capped with pediments, broken gables and other motifs of the classic adaptation. In the latter half of the period even these wood panels gave place in some instances to plaster panelled in the same way and retaining the caps and trappings of the Wren Renaissance style.

In a word, then, the background idea of the room had changed. It had taken a long step toward the

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realization of the background for furniture, although a heaviness caused by an unpleasant scale relation is very apparent in the interior architectural features where the wall is anything but flat. Furniture was adapted to man and his uses. Decoration was confused with ornamentation, and where ornament was used it enriched but it rarely beautified.

Through the introduction and treatment of mahogany it had been made clear that it was possible to have furniture without carving or even marquetry, and a new note was struck in the function and in the decorative treatment of wood in cabinetmaking. Domestic ideals were triumphing over political authority and religious ecstasy in the field of art creation.

Too much cannot be said of the importance of this period in striking these new notes in the evolution of the domestic idea as it has been worked out in England and the United States. If one can see the Queen Anne period as responsible for these steps ahead, and at the same time realize that in doing this it lacks the æsthetic merit, the grace and charm, the almost supernatural beauty which the French and Italian periods have expressed, then he is able to give to the period of Queen Anne its just due. He is able to accept what it has done that is good, and to look to other periods for those essential qualities which were apparently overlooked in working for the domestic ends which it so splendidly accomplished.



## PART II

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PERIOD OF INDIVIDUAL CREATION— CHIPPENDALE, HEPPLEWHITE, SHERA- TON—ADAM AND OTHER GEORGIAN TYPES

AT no place in the development of the English people is the democratic idea for which the Magna Charta stood more clearly demonstrated than in the furniture and furnishing ideas of the period known as the Georgian. The Queen Anne style lasted through the reign of George I and nearly through that of George II. At this time the Louis XV period was at its best in France. A more or less close intimacy between France and England had brought many English people of the upper classes into contact with the French salon. The gorgeous period of Louis XIV had been admired and copied in a limited way by some of the English cabinet makers, and many of them had studied at close range both the Louis XIV and Louis XV styles.

The domestic tendencies of the court of Queen Anne had established a prototype in England of the French salon. It was the custom of court ladies and others to meet together for embroidery and conversation, though their topics were, perhaps, less weighty or witty than those discussed in the French salon. The democratic sentiment in religion and in social practice had so permeated the core of English life that an ex-

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odus to Holland and to the united colonies had been going on for over a century.

Liberty of thought in this country and in England had a wonderful effect upon the demands, and therefore upon the creations, in the applied art field of the English people. As men began to think for themselves they began to do for themselves. They were no longer willing to allow the royal will to decide the shape of a chair or how many a man should have and how he should use them after he owned them. Each man conceived, by an apparently simultaneous impulse, the idea that the house was the expression of the individual who lived in it and that each person had not only the right to a special design, but was in duty bound to attempt to have something made which expressed his peculiar idea of what that object should be.

One of the first persons to sense this situation and act upon it was one Thomas Chippendale by name, whose influence between 1750 and 1800 can scarcely be estimated. So important has he become in the study of late English furniture that many believe everything that was designed between these dates was done by Chippendale or under his direction. Not only is this true, but one frequently meets people who confuse the Colonial types of the time with the Chippendale style, and not a few persist in confusing Hepplewhite, Sheraton, Mayhew and others with Chippendale.

Too much cannot be said in commendation of the great pioneer who defied tradition, took away from royalty and the court the right to dictate styles, and freed man to express himself in any way he saw fit, Yet to give him all the glory, or to ascribe to him all

the niceties which were brought out as a result of his conception, is to overrate what he did and to under-rate the influence and work of other men as worthy of consideration as he.

Of the early life of this man little is known. In 1754 he brought out a book called "The Gentleman's and Cabinet Maker's Director." This book has been considered a well-spring for all Georgian styles, but its value lies in the clear way in which it shows the right of the individual to dictate his own style.

Chippendale studied and observed the French styles. So taken was he with certain phases of these styles that one part of his work may be said to be an adaptation of the French to individual needs. He brought this about in an interesting way. Conceiving the idea that in place of the French salon an English tea shop and furniture shop could be combined, he established such an institution under his own roof. To this shop he invited not only his friends, but the wealthy people of London, as his guests for tea. While drinking tea, sitting upon a Chippendale model and viewing other examples of his work in the room, his guests proved an easy prey to his commercial scheme for showing furniture as it relates to the home. His success was pronounced and people flocked to the Chippendale shop to view, to purchase regardless of cost, and to order new articles of furniture which should be individual and made to express the personality of the owner.

This indeed was a strange departure in cabinet-making. These French Chippendale pieces will not be described here, but they are the forerunners of the individual styles in England and in the United States.

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Sometimes Chippendale fell under other influences than those of France. He borrowed from the Gothic and attempted to create dining-room and drawing-room chairs with Gothic motifs, but these were in commercial early Georgian style. The result was inartistic and a failure.

Sir William Chambers had opened up the wealth of artistic material in China, and had brought back many examples of textiles, pottery, carved wood, etc., from the limitless supply of the Chinese Empire. Chippendale, shrewd as usual, fastened upon the Chinese lattice and other Chinese motifs, and used them with considerable facility in the expression of a new Chinese-Chippendale style. These are interesting, sometimes picturesque, frequently grotesque, while they present no end of chance for criticism as to their proportion and practicability.

This is true especially of the chairs which he made. Mahogany was the wood of woods for Chippendale. His style, marking as it does the first of the individual styles, developed certain ideas which were originated during the Queen Anne period. He widened the seats of the chairs, accommodated the back more perfectly to the human figure and standardized the height of the seat from the floor. He also worked out more carefully the function of a sideboard, a bookcase, a secretary and a writing table. He sought by every known means to impress the idea of individualism upon his clients, and to furnish as many kinds and types of useful things as human ingenuity could devise. In all this he was eminently successful.

The other element which all good furniture must

have was frequently either missing or so slightly present that its detection is impossible. I refer to the quality of subtle refinement and æsthetically significant form. While some Chippendale pieces present a fine sense of proportion and a marvellous skill in technique, the general effect of the Chippendale furniture, with some exceptions, is heavy, frequently clumsy, lacking in grace, mixed in motif and altogether devoid of the charm of the later individual styles.

To Chippendale, then, we accord the glory of being a pioneer in establishing individual style in furniture and furnishing. To him also may be given the praise that rightfully belongs to him who is not afraid to take an idea from any place or any time and attempt to carry it out under modern conditions. To give him, however, full credit for all things Georgian and all things Colonial, or to dub him a great artist craftsman, is allowing him the qualities which properly belong to the two men who were associated with him in his later years.

The transition from the style called Chippendale to that of the style known as Hepplewhite, or to give the full title, of Messrs. A. Hepplewhite & Company, presents one of the most difficult problems in the Georgian styles. Perhaps nowhere in the development of English furniture was there a more marked change than in that made by these two men, who were practically contemporaneous. Notwithstanding the fact that Chippendale's furniture was lighter and more graceful, of a wider range and more usable than the earlier styles, he was unable to free himself from the weight of sturdy heaviness and formal arrangement which



seems typical of the national temperament up to this time.

Wealth, dignity and usefulness had been the vogue in the days of Queen Anne. A heavy ornamental display of some graceful objects was the result of this period. Till the last days of Queen Anne everything light, flippant, or buoyant was rigidly excluded, and these qualities appeared only rarely in the work of Chippendale.

The first real exponent of delicacy in English styles, of a subtle refinement in proportion and arrangement, was Hepplewhite, and to him this should be accredited. The home up to this time had a certain severity and heaviness in its treatment. The furniture consisted only of what was necessary to modern usage, but Hepplewhite early in his career introduced a different idea and brought into English furniture and English furnishing an entirely new and very important element. Hepplewhite's favourite maxim was "unite elegance with utility and blend the useful with the agreeable." This is the key to all that Hepplewhite did.

We have seen that Chippendale perpetrated fearful atrocities and caricatures on the styles of Louis XIV and XV and of the Chinese and Gothic periods. These in no way expressed the idea for which they originally stood. With Hepplewhite an entirely different view obtained. He published a book entitled "The Cabinet Maker's and Upholsterer's Guide, or Repository of Designs for Every Article of Household Furniture in the Newest and Most Approved Taste."

From the title of this book may be gleaned something of what was the ideal of A. Hepplewhite & Company.

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With Chippendale it was utility and commercial advantage. With Hepplewhite it was the use to which an article must be put, united with the æsthetic quality which is the expression of perfect taste.

Granting these premises, use and beauty, each equally important, you have the key to the great change which Hepplewhite wrought in the idea of individualizing the house. His was the artistic and refining influence which is the fruitful result of the union of the two necessary elements which make a useful object of any considerable art value, namely, the union of utility and elegance, or the fusion of function and beauty into one naturally expressive whole.

To be sure, it is quite impossible for a man with such aims to realize in the fullest sense his ideal. Hampered by the work of inferiors, followers of Chippendale, limited by a smaller clientèle at first among a people quite blinded by the new idea of individual styles, it took time and patience to work out in a positive way his own theories. The fruits of his work are seen in the greatly reduced scale of all articles which he designed. Perhaps some one will say these are too small, they look insecure, are not heavy enough for practical purposes. This may be true. In many instances it is true, but they are practical in expressing what they intended to express and are successful in uniting utility and beauty in the field in which they are usable at all. Not all Hepplewhite furniture is good in all places, but nearly all Hepplewhite furniture expresses the two elements which all furniture should express.

As has been said, it is not the aim of this discussion to illustrate the distinguishing characteristics of every

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style and period, but to awaken the reader to a sense of quality in things, and then to lead him to investigate the things or to read books in which these things are explained, and to find for himself the qualities for which they stand. That is the way to grow in knowledge of what is good and right, not only in furniture, but in any art object.

The period of Hepplewhite, or the work of Hepplewhite as I shall call it, while contemporary with the last days of Chippendale, may be called a second step in the evolution of the individual style. Since he was the pioneer in standardizing beauty, refinement and charm, it marks quite as important an epoch as that in which Chippendale departed from the monarchic idea.

The furniture, the textiles, and other art objects were delicate and refined in scale. Side pieces were done in plain wood not much ornamented, chairs were delicate in line not greatly ornamented excepting in the backs, where Hepplewhite seems to have let his desire for free play of line run an absolute riot.

The third very pronounced influence on this period is shown in the work of Sheraton, who was born in 1751, about the time that Chippendale published his famous book. Born of obscure parents, in dire poverty, gentle, retiring and contemplative, Sheraton was in direct contrast to the commercially social Chippendale and the polished gentleman Hepplewhite. Very early he showed an intense admiration for the most refined classic things in the period of Louis XVI. Chippendale, as has been said, took naturally to the period of Louis XIV and the heavier, more picturesque style of Louis

XV. Hepplewhite saw, appreciated and developed the delicacies, subtleties and refinements of Louis XV.

Temperance, restraint, simplicity and consistency—these were the things Sheraton saw in the foreign styles and these were the things he desired to express in his own work. Somewhat influenced, no doubt, by Hepplewhite and his work, Sheraton set about to eliminate something of the overworked detail of the Hepplewhite idea, and to express in their simplest terms the same qualities and refinement with a more classic feeling as the dominating idea.

Particularly in pieces such as cabinets, sideboards, dressers, tables, etc., Sheraton was supreme. Delicate, refined and splendidly constructed, they were decorated in perfect structural harmony by a fine and beautiful inlay of lighter wood. These pieces expressed in English terms the quiet, refined dignity that is found so characteristic of the plainest and most classic of the same objects in the period of Louis XVI. When these pieces or the counterparts of them found their way to the United States they did much to modify the belief already strongly entrenched here, that the heavier Queen Anne or the more elaborate Chippendale were the climaxes of beauty in furniture forms.

The chairs of Sheraton appear to have been less in harmony with his idea than his other articles of furniture. Perhaps this is because chair backs seem to have been the playground for both Sheraton and Hepplewhite. Consistent to a degree in some things, they apparently considered the backs of chairs safe places in which to experiment with apparently impossible motifs worked out in incongruous ways. There

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are, however, some rectangular backs with simple feeling, beautiful in proportion and charming in spirit, as are also the side pieces to which they naturally belong.

The most casual study of these things will show that in all Sheraton did there was everything to praise and little to criticise unfavourably. Toward the end of his career, when a broken old man, worn out in mind and body, he published some designs which show that his original idea had become well-nigh lost in the trend of the times. They were caricatures of the Empire in France. Though very little made up as designs, they have misled many into believing Sheraton stood for ideas which really were strictly opposed to all that the man worked for during the best part of his life.

Sheraton believed and proved that designing household furnishing was an art, one which every one could not with success take up as a means of livelihood. He understood that a gift for proportion as well as special training was essential, and he stood firmly for good taste and sound workmanship. But even these did not satisfy him. He determined to master the art of drawing and the principles of design and colour; in short, to become acquainted with the laws which governed the expression of his ideas in material form. This he held to be essential. In this, then, Sheraton added some new things to the already clearly defined tendencies of the Georgian times.

The discussion of individual styles may not be closed without a word in regard to the Adam brothers. The older of the two, Robert Adam, was born in 1728, and in 1768 he was appointed architect to the king. He



died in 1792. These dates are given that one may clearly associate the Adam brothers with the period when Chippendale, Hepplewhite and Sheraton were all at work in the cabinetmakers' field.

In truth the Adam brothers were not cabinetmakers, but architects, exterior and interior. To us their chief value lies in what they did for interior walls, ceilings, floors and chimney pieces, which brought back the interior of the room to the background idea. In this the Adam brothers performed a lasting service in the development of the modern house. Influenced greatly by the classic forms, particularly by the Greeco-Roman at Pompeii, they evolved a light and dainty classic style, a delicate rendition sometimes verging on the cold, sometimes even on the pretty, and withal, a new note in a development of the Georgian interior.

As far as their influence was felt on furniture and decorative objects it was not for improvement. One can dismiss for the present this phase from the category of Georgian furniture styles. Let us not fail, however, to appreciate the advantage of the softer and less ornamented wall surface, the simpler and more structurally panelled arrangement, the delicate and refined treatment of doorways, windows and chimney pieces, lest we overlook one of the very potent factors in the movement which has such a radical bearing upon our modern problem.

## PART II

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE COLONIAL STYLE

THIS style takes its name from the original Colonies as settled in North America during the seventeenth century and is the natural offspring of the parent stems—the European countries of Britain, the Netherlands and France.

In the early sixteen hundreds, about the time of the death of Elizabeth, religious, political and social conditions in England had reached the state of fomentation which resulted in the exodus of large numbers of Separatists to the Netherlands, where a larger freedom and a more democratic tendency was the accepted order of the time.

These Separatists, colonizing the western cities of the Netherland country, became somewhat mixed with the Dutch, at least they accepted Dutch forms as a partial expression of their life while in their adopted land. This was particularly true in the domestic field. Most of the Separatists were among the middle and upper classes, and they found economic necessity and religious teaching both naturally trending toward a simple, conservative and rather barren expression of the home ideal.

By 1625, when the Jacobean period in England was well under way, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode

Island were colonized mostly by Puritans who had left Holland and found a home in the new land. Virginia, Georgia and the Carolinas were colonized mainly by people directly from Great Britain without the influence of the adopted Dutch traditions. New York, or New Amsterdam, received its settlers from Holland direct. Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware were somewhat mixed with certain settlements of English, while others were of the Dutch middle classes. These settlements were, some of them, a little later than those of New England and the South.

These three rather distinct types of colonization received, off and on, considerable modifications from French influence. It is well to consider each of these as quite distinct from the others to appreciate the meaning of the term "Colonial."

The people of New England as we know them—Puritan in origin, conscientious, financially poor, sturdy, determined, conservative and hardy—developed a Colonial type quite in keeping with their general characteristics. These characteristics were crystallized and modified by the climatic conditions, while their art expressions were modified to suit the materials which were natural to the locality and by the ideals which had brought them to the new land.

Their product was a house not too pretentious in size, severely plain, generally all brick or wood, with the architectural and decorative modifications which their limited means and the rigour of the climate naturally dictated. The Anglo-classic mania of England was in their blood, though they could hardly expect to build their modest houses with solid marble columns,

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pilasters and cornices, or to erect their classic ideals in scale to correspond with the Jones and Wren ideas of Great Britain.

They did, however, admire the forms and seemed naturally to evolve sometimes a stone, more often a wooden pillar and capital, which, when combined with the brick or the wooden house, gave an altogether charming, though restrained, effect, known as the Northern Colonial type. To those interested in studying the peculiar charm of this type of classic manifestation the towns of Salem, Plymouth and Deerfield, Massachusetts, and those of Litchfield, Gilford and Hartford, Connecticut, present still some of the most delightful examples of the best development of the Colonial type.

Not alone in the domestic field was this Colonial style manifest. There was crystallized a religious manifestation known as the "New England meeting house," which by its nature expressed the whole story of the Separatists' idea. Gothic expression was an undisputed expression of the mediæval Roman church. The Anglican church modified it to express as nearly as possible the Anglican idea, but the Separatist could not see his new religious ideal manifest in terms of either the Roman or Anglican architecture; nor could he think of representing this new faith, particularly in the interior, in any forms or combinations which tend to create a sensuous delight through the æsthetic combination of its significant forms and colours. To those who have seen the New England meeting house this suggestion will create a sufficient mental picture to give the desired criteria for judging the Northern Colonial its religious aspect.



A COLONIAL HALL EXPRESSING THE QUALITIES OF SIMPLICITY, SINCERITY AND RESTRAINT  
SO CHARACTERISTIC OF ALL COLONIAL TYPES.





The interior of the house at first expressed architecturally the influence of Wren, the Adam brothers and their followers, in a restrained and sometimes primitive way with flat, bare walls, white ceilings and wooden floors in strips. Among the more affluent, classic motifs are found in the cornices, and the wood trim betrays a decided Anglo-classic influence. Some of these doors, windows and chimney pieces are beautiful in proportion, chaste and simple in effect, and altogether charming. Among the poorer people the classic elements were almost unknown. Walls were, like the ceilings, bare and white or sometimes coloured with a tinted whitewash. A little later they were covered with wall papers as these became the vogue in England and, gradually, the floors received the traditional rag carpet, either braided or woven, as the fashion of the day dictated.

The first furniture was, of course, a direct importation from England and it was of the Jacobean type—mainly Queen Anne and Chippendale, with Queen Anne in the ascendancy. By 1700 the Colonies were sufficiently developed to receive a good deal of furniture, and newcomers brought with them the Queen Anne idea. By the early seventeen hundreds these pieces of furniture were copied in Hartford, Connecticut, Boston and Massachusetts, an American made Queen Anne style resulting.

As soon as the Chippendale furniture was produced in England, importations to the Colonies began, and very soon the cabinetmakers of the New England States reproduced Chippendale models. Gradually from this reproduction was evolved throughout the North a simpler

and less ornate style in chairs, tables, beds and side pieces. These were known as New England Colonial.

The chairs are particularly interesting since they represent so many types of the late modified Georgian in England. These had seats made of rush, braided husks and sometimes cane, while they were not infrequently upholstered in some foreign material. These straight-backed Puritanic forms made in birch, beech, maple and other Colonial woods, small in scale, restrained in style and without ornament, constituted what is known as the New England style. Mahogany, of course, played a large part in this development and found its way into the structure of the interior in the form of solid doors, wainscoting and balustrades as well as furniture.

Colonial furniture having become the vogue, it was found essential to repeat its motif in doors, balustrades and the like, in order to tie it successfully to the room of which it was a part. This particular point should be of interest to every person who is using the Colonial idea or who is enamoured of the mahogany medium. Some consistent repetition of the idea is essential to produce the desired design effect and also to give it, in the least, the classic quality of consistency in its distribution.

We have dwelt at length upon the Northern Colonial because in the largest sense this expression of Colonial has influenced the others, and in later times is the phase most generally admired, copied and adapted. In considering this let us remember that the Colonial is but the child of a European mother, that it is by no means a new idea, but is the younger generation's

version of the older generation's expression of their religious, political and social life. Naturally, it differs from the original, but in essentials it is the same, its differences being just those that any adaptation to other circumstances than its own should show. A copy cannot express anything except those ideas for which the original stands. New modes of living and new ways of doing things must result in new forms of production in the materials used.

The Southern Colonial is perhaps the next in importance considered with reference to our modern times. As has been stated, the Southern colonies were settled by the English. In most cases they were people of some financial standing and were many of them communicants of the established Anglican church. Maryland was an exception, inasmuch as it was founded by people representing the Roman faith, who were also drawn from the better English classes. Larger financial resources, a less Puritanic religious viewpoint, a broader social horizon and a warmer climate, each in its way produced an influence distinctly felt in the evolution of the Southern house. The Southern gentleman's property was in a large estate. This necessitated a larger, a somewhat more pretentious and a less conservative house.

The Colonial mansion, with its roomy proportions, its splendid verandas with classic columns, its finely wrought cornices and other classic details, gives the most impressive example of the different ideals held by the two sections of the same country. The furnishings did not differ radically from those of the North. The mahogany type of Queen Anne and Chippendale

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became the standard furniture of the South, with an occasional introduction of Hepplewhite and Sheraton, original pieces from England or the very best copies procurable in the united colonies. Larger resources made it possible to import these things from the mother country.

Occasionally in the North the Dutch influence was felt. This was almost entirely lacking in the South, and the Anglo-classic architecture with the Queen Anne and early Chippendale became its paramount expression. New York, or New Amsterdam, was the natural expression of the Dutch-Netherland idea. This decided Dutch feeling, the same that William and Mary brought to England in 1688, is the foundation fact in the so-called Middle Colonial type. The architecture of this section was strictly Dutch, the classic idea having scarcely modified it at all. The Flemish scroll, the Dutch gable, the Dutch proportion and detail dominate not only the exterior, but the interior architecture. Furniture, too, was structurally Dutch.

These three expressions of the Colonial are sufficient to give the feeling for the Colonial types. They should enable one to perceive clearly two quite individual phases of the classic idea and to contrast these two with a somewhat non-classic evolution which characterized the Dutch constructive manner. Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware represent the mixed Dutch and English influences in a remarkably interesting way. Philadelphia alone presents sufficient examples of both types for the intensive study of what the combination effected in combining two original ideas.



These manifestations, gradually evolving, received a remarkable jolt in the later days of Louis XVI. After the recognition of the independence of the Colonies, there arose diplomatic situations between them and France which caused the exchange of ambassadors. Lafayette came to the States, and Benjamin Franklin was sent to the French court. Picture, if you can, Benjamin Franklin in his New England clothes and top boots at the court of Marie Antoinette. On the other hand, it is quite as impossible to imagine the refined and gallant Lafayette as entirely at home in the united colonies, although undoubtedly Washington and the diplomatic set around him were more nearly congruous than was Franklin at the French court.

The ladies of the American capital took most graciously to Lafayette and his manners. The Louis XVI style through his influence was espoused and became the fad of the time. Washington's house at Mount Vernon, Virginia, in its interior finish and its furnishings, is so strongly affected by the Louis XVI style that people frequently call it a Louis XVI interior. This vogue spread throughout the South and greatly influenced the interior decoration of the next half century. At the accession of Victoria, however, this impetus was exhausted and a new idea prevailed.

While the expression of the Louis XVI style was more marked in the South, it was also noticeable in New England, particularly in the northeastern part. A few years before the fall of the French kingdom Marie Antoinette planned to flee and make her home in the United States. A shipload of house furnishings was sent to Maine, and this, which was never used by

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her but which was distributed later, was the leaven which leavened the whole eastern Colonial to a less severe and more graceful expression of the later Colonial type. The drawing-room in New England was an unheard-of luxury. The parlour, with its closed blinds and drawn curtains, for use on holidays only, had taken its place. The advent of the Louis XVI idea brought with it the conception of the use of this luxurious room, and the Louis XVI expression seemed fitting for the most treasured of all the rooms in the house. A little later Hepplewhite, Sheraton and Louis XVI controlled the parlours of the upper-class New England house.

It may be well, before leaving the strictly Colonial type, to mention the clocks, pictures, woodwork, china, etc., which were accessory to this style. The grandfather's clock, for example, beloved for its sentiment, is a product of Chippendale's fertile invention. This immediately found place in the Colonial. Under some conditions it certainly has a charm and expresses the spirit of the Colonial time. On the other hand, in modern times, it is often used in such a way that it becomes the most important thing in a room in scale, in colour value and in material, thus giving to an unimportant thing the room emphasis.

The Colonial glass, the more ornate of the mirrors, and the other Queen Anne and Chippendale ornamental pieces, should be considered with great care in the modern house. Clocks were practically a new idea in England at this time, and since they were new, the cabinetmaker did not hesitate to give them an unseemly prominence. Mirrors in the days of Queen

Anne were a new luxury to middle-class people, and to possess one was to have reached a degree of affluence quite desirable in those days. Presumably human nature was the same then as now. Having arrived at the place where a clock and mirror or two were possible, why not have this clock and the mirrors as important as possible that all might realize the social prominence which the owner had just attained?

Without thinking how new pieces happened to appear, there is no possibility of understanding their relative importance in the house. To be sure, there is the right of every man to choose a thing simply because he likes it, or because he regards it as beautiful, but if his aim is a room which shall be a perfect unit and which shall not only express good taste and what he personally likes, but also shall express completely the unit idea, then he must take into consideration the relative value of each piece he places in the room.

Colonial woodwork is an element which deserves some consideration. The Hepplewhite and Adam tendencies had been to colour and also to use the natural wood. Enamel was rampant in France in the days of Louis XV and XVI. The Colonial ideas, excepting the very earliest, were obtained from these sources. When the Colonial house was conceived, its exterior architectural decorative features appeared in white. Consistency alone demanded the white woodwork in the interior. The instinctive feeling for a chaste cleanliness, which was next to godliness in New England, may have been another reason for the painted white woodwork.

At any rate, the very term Colonial suggests painted

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white woodwork with mahogany doors and balustrades. This strong contrast of mahogany and white woodwork would be quite impossible if it were not for the purpose of tying the furniture to the wall or relating it to the background. The impossibility of this dark, heavy mahogany furniture against a white or very light background must be apparent to any one.

This was the Colonial way of harmonizing in some degree these two inconsistencies. A quite effective one it was, too, in many instances. This strong value contrast is not of the most refined nature and, if interpreted in just that way, sometimes seems crude and somewhat harsh. When white woodwork is used let it be toned to very deep old ivory. This is sufficiently yellow and is also sufficiently neutralized to key it to other elements in the room. Let the ceiling be done in exactly the same tone as the woodwork—not too light, never bright, but a deep, rich old ivory—and the Colonial idea is not disturbed while the keying of the colour relates the woodwork to the wall and room furnishings. This type of woodwork is not only good in a Colonial room, but it is often the best way to treat any room where the woodwork by its colour, its texture, or its finish is garish, crude and unpleasant. Sometimes in modern houses soft grays for wall, woodwork and ceiling are most effective.

Out of this Colonial period and out of the Victorian, which may be roughly said to begin with 1827, grew what is known as our black walnut period. This and the period immediately following in the United States are analogous to those periods in one's life that he hesitates to discuss with anybody outside the immediate

family. It is perhaps only necessary to remind ourselves that we passed through such an experience which we now look back upon as excusable from only one standpoint, our youth.

The Colonial period, as we have seen, was the youth's expression of the way his father started him in life. Some time the youth must think for himself; he must do for himself, and the first results are not always all that one could desire. This is what the black walnut period really was. It was the young child's first expression of his own ideas in his own way.

The Colonial force had spent itself. The awakening nation had other and new ideals. Its own resources, its own activities, dominated expression, and black walnut, resembling somewhat the Victorian medium, was seized upon as the first wood available for such use. The financial resources of the country were increasing, we must, therefore, have an appearance of wealth. Since marble is expensive why not top our tables, bureaus, dressers and the like with this beautiful native stone? Surely the ancient Romans made their columns of marble and granite combined; the Louis XV period has its consoles structurally in gilt and its tops in marble. What matters it if the value difference between black walnut and white marble is somewhat strong, or if the proportions of one material to the other, or to the parts of the object in question, are totally unrelated? Then, too, there are the wonderful architectural effects of Sir Christopher Wren in England and in America. Why not add some of these structural features to the already too ponderous bed? And then, if classic and non-classic mouldings will give it greater weight and



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a more decided appearance of luxury, why not put them on so long as they will stay on? Fatally the callow youth has expressed his first ideas of his new furniture in a most voluminous way.

We need not go into detail as to how the Oriental rug was used in this period, and also the rag carpet and the ingrain when they made their appearance. The Oriental was at least rare and expensive and the ingrain was quite new, while the rag carpets were but the left-overs of a less completely evolved people.

What is true of carpets and rugs is equally apparent in all other things found in the period which we call black walnut. Many of us can recall the crowded sitting-rooms, the newly done, over done parlours, and the ungainly and heavily furnished bedrooms, with a feeling of despair and pity. Nevertheless, bad as it was, impossible as it is, it was a natural step in the evolution of the modern idea. It was at least original. Originality is one of the qualities which we must all recognize as commendable and in line with progress. At the same time, to make originality the only criterion, or the main criterion, is to focus our attention on too unimportant an idea. Original things which are bad may be steps toward better ones, but they are not ends; they are means to an end, which end is, of course, an expression of ideas fitting and beautiful in themselves. To unqualifiedly condemn the black walnut movement is to refuse to realize the law of progress, but to fail to see its inconsistencies and its place as a means to an end, is to cloud the vision for all future creations which are original and better.

Because of the insatiable desire for self-expression

which is a psychological quality, the American people were not satisfied with the black walnut era. They soon outgrew it, and instinctively turned to Europe for ideas with which to modify it. They still had with them the Queen Anne mirrors with their erratic, curved-line edges. Some of the furniture had equally impossible and distracting curved lines. The jig-saw, too, had made its appearance, and the straight line as a beauty factor was lost to sight.

Some one has said: "Anybody can appreciate a curved line, but it takes an artist to see beauty in a straight one." This may be true. But if it does not take an artist to see the difference between a beautiful curved line and one which is ugly, then there is no difference between curved lines and they are all beautiful.

Puritan severity, classic simplicity and consistency, qualities having their origin in the Greek ideal, had dominated a great part of the Colonial, but were completely lost in the period which extended from about 1840 to 1890. From 1875 on there were two conflicting influences—one the classic and the other the individualistic original, which we have just described.

The atrocities committed in 1875 and 1890 were not in furniture alone, but were, perhaps, even more noticeable in veranda brackets, which, by the way, supported nothing; in grills over doors where plain wall space should have been; league upon league of curved appliqué woodwork around mantels, and brass, gilt and iron chandeliers, where the writhing motions of a den of snakes would suggest perfect repose by comparison, and many other manifestations of this same idea. This, by the way, is the most difficult error to

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cope with in the field of art expression in the modern house.

Many American designers still believed these things to be good. Landlords and builders used them as baits to tempt their clients to a purchase. In fact, some remain who, either through force of habit or because they have not given the matter thought, fail to see the contortions, the unrelated motions and the ugly proportions created through the use of the meaningless curve.

From 1890 on there has been a strong reaction against this ugliest of all original periods. Contact with European countries through increased facilities for travel, the expenditure of vast sums of money by the wealthier classes in the importation of European art objects, the clearly defined and sane attitude of the best architects together with the increased desire and facility for education, wrought the great change. People began to see that original things were not always good. They also found by travel that their money could buy almost anything in any period.

Those who could afford to do so first espoused the French idea for interiors. A few of the best and most expensive decorators in the country essayed to do a Louis XV, Louis XVI or Empire room, and assured the client that it was an exact reproduction as to walls and ceiling with original pieces for furnishing. In a few cases these rooms turned out to be good, and in not a few totally bad, because of a lack of harmony not only between the furniture and the walls but in the relations of the room with its furnishings and in its spirit to modern times.

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It also happened that an actual reproduction of an article of furniture or of a ceiling as it was in France created a scale relation, colour combination or maze of motifs quite impossible under conditions here. For ten or fifteen years, however, the French manner was ardently courted and by some charmingly used. Few there were, however, who dared omit a single motif from the ceiling at Versailles for fear the client should discover that it was not an exact reproduction. There were fewer still who would have modified a period room in the slightest particular even by changing an article of furniture. It was slavish copy.

This domination of the French idea lasted for some time, but during the following ten years gradually changed, and the English manner became the rage.

For ordinary purposes and general use no styles are so well fitted for general service as this. This is because the English periods are the expression of a domestic idea, democratic in thought and meaning, and also because it is less expensive to reproduce the English periods in general than those of the better French styles. Still another reason, which is more important than either, is the fact that the French styles cannot be reproduced by any one save a craftsman with a perfect knowledge of the technique of his art. The French periods depend for their beauty upon their refined and exquisite charm. Unless these are elements in his consciousness, a craftsman cannot produce the results. The English periods are simpler, more intellectually conceived and more practically evolved. It takes as much intellect to reproduce the English periods with some degree of accuracy, but far less of the

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æsthetic sense is required than would be essential to the same degree of accuracy in the French styles.

At present we are entering a new era in this country. Neither the French styles nor the English express exactly what the most refined and educated person in any walk of life desires to express in his living-room, bedroom, dining-room or library. A strong tendency is apparent to return to the first principles of the Italian Renaissance. In them are found certain structural and decorative facts which are fundamentals in all periods which have followed.

The thoughtful student must analyze this Italian Renaissance, and he will find that the Classic, the Christian, and the Humanistic influences must be separately considered in order to form any estimate of its meaning. Having done this, it is not strange that our best decorators now are standing firmly on this first step in the evolution of the New Renaissance. The coming period in American art will be one in which the intellect and the feelings of a cultivated people with limitless resources will both assert themselves in the expression of the modern house.

No period will be copied in its entirety. No period will be omitted because unfit for the expression of an idea. Every period will be studied and studied with one thing in view, and that is to know the ideas for which the period stands, to see the qualities in applied art which stand for those ideas, and to use those ideas and qualities to express the individual idea in the home. This will be the Second Renaissance, the era which is opening before us.



# PART III



## PART III

## CHAPTER XV

### THE MODERN HOUSE

THE problem of the modern house involves something more than merely providing a pretty, healthful, physically comfortable place to satisfy man's demand for shelter and rest. It is the criterion of a man's taste, the visible response to his instinctive call for beauty. It furnishes the environment in which are born and nurtured the early impressions of those who are to set the taste standards in the generations that follow.

This consideration dignifies interior decoration by placing it among the serious professions. No longer a mere matter of collecting and housing like a department store or a museum, or of providing a place in which to sleep and eat, it is destined to become, as man realizes more fully the power of environment, one of the strongest and most scientific of the educational factors in our generation. The time will come when its power in the evolution of race consciousness will be appreciated at its true worth.

Though realizing fully the importance of sanitation and the difficulties arising from financial limitation, it is not our purpose to deal with these questions. It is rather our desire to emphasize here only the functional and artistic phases of this great problem. More books have been written and more has been said on the

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subjects of hygiene and economics than any of us can apply, but the principles that govern the choice and arrangement of materials, colours, forms and lines as they relate to common usage or as they appeal to the artistic sense, have been practically overlooked.

To stimulate the reader to think before buying, to have a sensible reason for his purchase, to know the power of colour and form, and to see how men of other nations in the past have expressed their personal and racial ideas, is our aim.

The æsthetic sense is instinctive and expresses in man his desire or appetite for beauty. What a man selects in response to this demand of his nature and how he arranges what he has selected, determines his taste. A man's taste improves as the æsthetic sense becomes refined or sensitized to the point of responding to the more subtle combinations of forms and colours. This matter of taste is not a fixed quality. One may have the gift or natural tendency to refined choice, but no man has by divine right a monopoly of good taste. Our standards are constantly changing during life as affected by study and by environment.

Every time a colour is seen, a sound heard, or an odour perceived, a new sensation is recorded in consciousness, or one previously recorded is made more permanent by repetition. This is true of all sensations received through the senses. These numberless sensation records accumulated since birth represent the part environment has played in the evolution of our consciousness. In other words, it is what one really is, for out of consciousness comes one's acts, and his thoughts and acts affect his personality and his use of

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SUITABLE BEDROOM FOR TWO BOYS, ADMITTING THE ADDITION OF SUCH PERSONAL OBJECTS AS ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE COMFORT AND IMMEDIATE PLEASURE OF THE OCCUPANTS.



SIMPLE BEDROOM SUITABLE FOR GUEST'S CHAMBER IN COUNTRY HOUSE. WELL ARRANGED, PROPERLY DECORATED, WITH CHINTZ MOTIF ON A RESTFUL BACKGROUND. THE ROOM IS IMPERSONAL AND SUITED TO CHANGE OF GUEST.





all material objects. Seeing this psychological truth clearly is the foundation for recognizing the importance of the interior of the house. This, briefly, then, is the status of environment as a factor in character building and as a power in the evolution of a national civilization. It is even more lasting in its results than hygiene for the body or money for selfish purposes. It is this that determines the standpoint of taste and may become the stepping-stone to a higher plane of living both for the individual and the nation.

What, then, can be more important than the house, especially its interior? Is it not here that the child first sees colours, hears sounds, touches textures? Is this not the place where first impressions are received? These impressions should be of the quality one would have the young mind make permanent as standards for future judgment. They will represent what the owner of the house regards as good taste in the gratification of his desires. As the æsthetic sense quickens, the taste for greater subtlety grows, and a changed environment is the result.

The artistic home should not be regarded as a luxury. Its possession should be regarded as a duty to the cause of civilization as well as a response to the normal desires inspired by the æsthetic sense. It is essential to the general taste standard of the future and to the full appreciation and enjoyment of beauty.

The obstacles that stand in the way of a realization of this ideal environment are numerous. There are so many questions arising in each individual problem, so many apparently insurmountable difficulties, and, worst of all, there are so many people who are willing

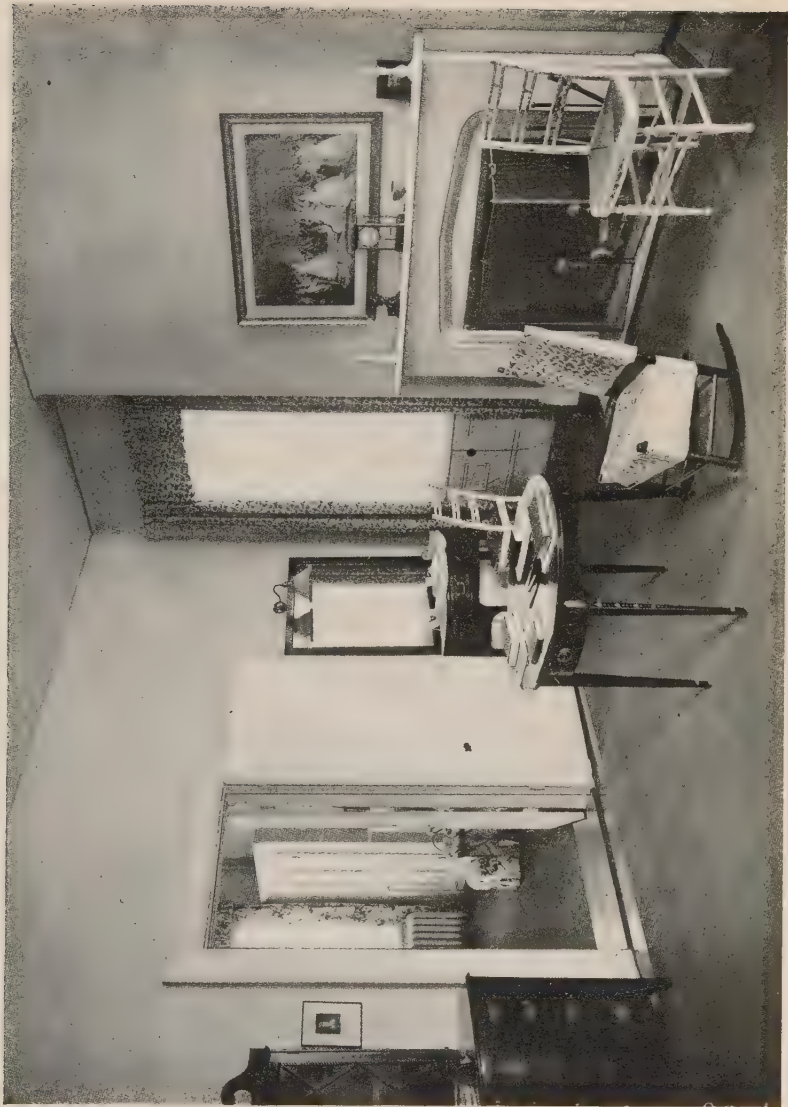
## INTERIOR DECORATION

to give up anything that does not come with perfect ease. It may be well to look into some of these complications.

In any discussion of a personal problem, outside of a limited number of wealthy people, the first difficulty raised is: "I cannot afford to buy good things. If I had the money I should certainly do so." Then: "I have bad things and why should I be so particular when I must put the new with the acknowledged bad which I already have?"

To the first of these objections it may be answered that all expensive things are not good; nor are all cheap ones bad. Of course we must allow that there is a greater field for beautiful things where unlimited means are at the command of the designer, but we must also remember that unless the designer thoroughly understands what is good and what is not, the field for his caprice and ignorance is increased in proportion to the amount of money he has to spend. Often the money limit is the saving thing in the selection of articles as to their kind or their number. The question of selection is one of colour, form, line and texture and of the principles that produce harmony. It is not a question of the kind of wood, how much it cost, and how much it is carved, nor is it a question of how brilliant the bronze is, nor how gorgeous the velvet. When one looks at any object from the standpoint of the principles of harmony, which should control its structure and its decoration, he has the answer to the objection "I have no money," for money is not the standard of judgment.

As to the second objection given, it may be said that it is never too late to begin to do right. The first ray



A DELIGHTFULLY SIMPLE MODERN BEDROOM WITH FEMININE TOUCH, EXPRESSING QUALITIES ESSENTIAL TO REST AND SLEEP. THE FURNITURE IS PLACED FOR COMFORT AND USE. THE TREATMENT OF THE WINDOWS, MANTEL AND FURNITURE PLEASING AND DECORATIVE. PICTURE FRAME EXCELLENT.







MAN'S BEDROOM, IN A MODERN APARTMENT, EXPRESSING RESTFULNESS, INDIVIDUALITY AND MASCULINE QUALITY. CHARM DISTURBED BY THE BAD SCALE IN THE MOTIFS OF TEXTILE AT HEAD OF BED. GOOD MIRROR FRAME, WELL HUNG.



of light as to what is good in furniture or fittings should be followed. Have definitely in mind what your ideal of the room would be if you could have everything new and have it at once. A mental picture of a result is essential before the first step in the solution of a problem in interior decoration can be successfully taken. Buy each article with the finished whole in mind, and as fast as a bad thing can be eliminated procure another in its place that harmonizes with this mental picture. The house will turn out better than one expects, and the best of it all is that the individual grows with it.

If the available money is limited start with the background of the room. If \$25, \$50, or \$100 be used, let that be expended to make the woodwork, the walls, the ceiling and the floor a suitable background. The quality of rest will find its way into the room and right relationships of colour be easy to establish the moment the backgrounds are satisfactory.

If more changes can be made let them be in the hangings and rugs for, next to the background, these are the most important things in any room.

Having disposed of background, rugs and hangings, furniture and decorative material can be dealt with very easily, very simply and quite gradually with a continued feeling of satisfaction that the room is growing better every day. The mistake made by most people, including many decorators, is in trying to make things appear moderately satisfactory against impossible backgrounds.

Do not buy sideboards until the wall paper and floor are suitable. Never mind what your furniture is

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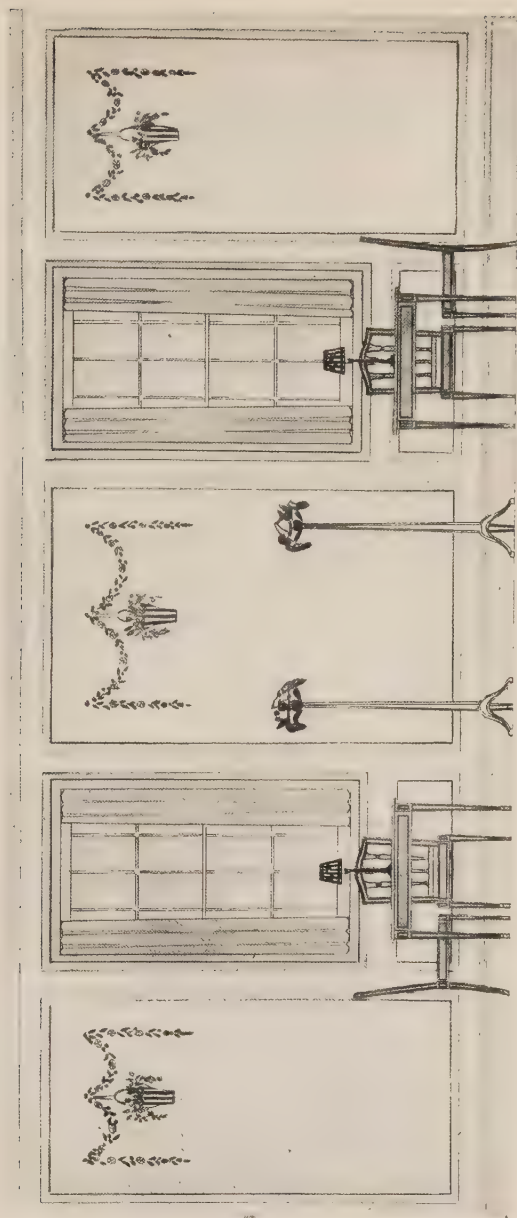
until you have something to put it against. Do not be distressed about vases, fancy clocks and other unnecessary and distracting objects until your furniture is right and the more important decorative ideas are well looked after. In other words, build from the bottom up. The background is the foundation upon which all things must rest.

Another objection has been made, something like this: "There are the old inherited pieces of furniture" (usually mahogany) "which have belonged to the family for generations. These, of course, are not good, but how can I part with them since they are family heirlooms?" If one is not handicapped by these things he usually is by wedding presents, holiday gifts or senseless purchases made without thought or because they were believed at the time to be bargains.

Heirlooms, gifts and foolish purchases are either a matter of sentimentality or of supposed economy.

Aunt Jane may have been a good woman. She may, however, have had some misconceptions as what constitutes the most artistic combination of colour, line and form in a chair or table. In this state of Aunt Jane's consciousness she probably bought the table which you now have. Now that she is probably in a state of consciousness in which she realizes how bad the table is, neither you nor I can be expected to accept this table as our idea of what a table should be. The fact that one disposes of Aunt Jane's table in the wood pile or the attic in no way interferes with one's respect and love for Aunt Jane.

Until it is possible to disassociate tables, chairs and other objects from human beings, and particularly



SIMPLE ELEVATION SUGGESTING WALL AND FURNITURE TREATMENT FOR COUNTRY TEA-ROOM, MODERN AND DECORATIVE.







SKETCH FOR LOUIS XIV DINING-ROOM, MODIFIED AND ADAPTED TO MODERN CONSTRUCTION AND MODERN, DECORATIVE IDEAS.



from human beings in other states of existence, it will not be possible to deal successfully with family heirlooms in modern houses. Let us judge the table, the chair, the chest or the bed, on its merits as an abstract idea, disassociated from whoever had it, and be big enough and broad enough to take a stand against anything that is not good and right, be its associations ever so closely connected with family or friends. This is the only possible way in which one can be in a frame of mind to consider the disposition of such articles as he knows to be unfit for further use. It may be well to remember that there is a difference between that noble and highly spiritual quality called sentiment and the weak, sickly counterfeit of it which we call sentimentality.

What to do with these things, provided one is willing to part with them, is willing to risk family criticism, the friendly questions that arise when the occasional visitor finds his gift missing from the top of the piano, is a serious question. The habit of giving furniture that is unfit for use to the poor is deadly, if one considers at all the establishment of a taste standard. Why should the poor have things in worse taste than anybody who is not poor? A man has a right to good things, and the practice of giving half-worn bad things in clothing and in furnishings to somebody who is supposed to be grateful for anything on earth is perhaps responsible more than any other one thing for the present way of regarding the interior of the house.

Better for a man to have a pine table, chair, bench and bed, decently stained, with respectable lines and well placed in his room, than a Queen Anne table, a

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marble-top black walnut dresser, a Morris chair and a Mission bed, any one of which may or may not be an atrocity beyond words. There is always the wood pile, the unspeakable attic, and as a last resort, if the house is large enough, a special room set apart for idols.

Again we constantly meet the objection, particularly in rented houses, that the landlords refuse to do anything. If there is no landlord to refuse and the man owns his house, then it is, that he cannot afford it or does not like to destroy or mar anything that has been so for a length of time.

Let us first deal with the landlord. In many houses or apartments built twenty-five years or even fifty years ago are found grills over doors, plate rails anywhere, abnormal growths on and around the chimney piece and set mirrors. There are also atrocious stair balustrades, garish tiles around the chimney piece, wedding-cake decorations about the ceiling and impossible varnished or grained wood surfaces in the trim. These things have made such places not only uninhabitable but dungeons of misery to all persons of feeling or intelligence.

It is sometimes hard to get the landlord to tear these things out. There can be no background until every one of these things has been changed. The grills, the abnormal growths, the wedding-cake decorations and the balustrades must come out, while the trim must be redone. Almost always this can be, at least, painted old ivory or gray, which, though a last resort, is under most circumstances the thing to do. The tiles can also be painted and should be the colour of the trim, for they, too, are an essential element of the background idea





MODERN DINING-ROOM IN A CITY APARTMENT, EXPRESSING ELEGANCE, DIGNITY AND REFINEMENT, OMITTING OSTENTATIOUS DISPLAYS OF FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS.





A MODERN DINING-ROOM SHOWING THE "GEORGIAN AND CHIPPENDALE FEELING" SUCCESSFULLY AMERICANIZED AND EXPRESSED IN TERMS OF GOOD TASTE. NOTICE THE BEAUTIFUL ARRANGEMENT OF TAPESTRY AND ITS ACCESSORIES, THE WINDOWS AND HOW THE ORNAMENTAL CLOCK AND CABINET ARE POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF A SIMPLE BACKGROUND.



which is the fundamental one in the whole conception. The elimination of these stumbling-blocks is quite as necessary to carrying out any scheme of furnishing as the purchase of any number of new things or the arrangement of these things after one has acquired them.

The assertion is often made that it is impossible to find good things in the trade. Frequently one hears a remark such as: "There are no wall papers except flowered ones to be bought in our town." "There are no one or two tone rugs nor other types whose ornament figures do not stand out and offend the sensitive eye." "Cretonnes, printed linens and other textiles are much too bright and too floral in their pattern and good, dignified, unobtrusive patterns cannot be bought." Furniture, too, comes in for its share of criticism along exactly the same line.

In answer to this let me say that demand always has and always will govern the supply; that the supply will be furnished when there is a demand, and that the trade has in stock exactly what people want. When people demand better things, manufacturers will make them and tradesmen will sell them. It is the public taste that is at fault and not the trade.

After twelve years of intimate acquaintance with every branch of allied interior decorating trades in the largest city in America, I am convinced that one thing is true: that there is no one class of persons in this country more anxious to learn, more ready to respond or more loyal in their efforts for better things than the trade. This statement applies to wholesale and retail men, to those managing the textile shops, wall-paper



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shops and furniture shops. It is a very general and clearly defined feeling. When the consumer raises his standard of what is good the producer will raise his, and the middleman will respond naturally and quickly.

The greatest hindrance to our realization of what is best in house planning is found within ourselves. Do you not frequently hear people say: "I like it. I do not care whether it is right or not; it pleases me, so what difference does it make? It was good enough for my day and I guess it is good enough for yours." Or, "I love nature and therefore want it as much as possible about me in the house." These personal whims are responsible for more than is at first apparent. Is it not well to ask ourselves: why do I like it, or why am I pleased? Is it because it conforms to the laws of beauty and arrangement, or is it because I do not know whether it is good or not? Does it please me because it does not please somebody else, or because I have a reason for being pleased? Some who in their day made long journeys on horseback instead of a steam train, or went to bed with a candle instead of an electric light, may have changed their attitude of mind in respect to these conditions while they have not changed them quite so radically in other matters equally important. To deal with nature as nature and to deal with a deformation of nature as interior decoration are two radically different matters.

Let not the nature lover believe that anybody is likely to translate nature into carpets, wall papers, brass ornaments and plaster of paris, and do so successfully. Let him go on loving nature in nature's place. It is meet and right so to do. At the same time let



A MODERN LIVING-ROOM, IN WHICH PERSONALITY AND CHARM RESULT IN A HAPPY SELECTION AND COMBINATION OF SIMPLE, UNRELATED OBJECTS IN PERIOD AND MATERIALS.



him wake up, and wake up now, to the fact that whatever of nature is translated into material must be conventionalized so as to be consistent in that material, or it loses all its art value and becomes a cheap attempt to imitate something which it is impossible to imitate.

There is a difficulty, too, with persons who are entirely wedded to some one historic period and believe that no other is worthy of expression, or that no other national one is fit to use for any kind of individual expression. Some people are essentially French in their manner and form of expressing themselves. Others are English. Some are so individual as to be Louis XV or Jacobean, and a few, I regret to say, are still Queen Anne. But people are indeed rare that are adequately expressed by any one period idea, and the growing tendency is to ignore the exactly reproduced period and to accept, adapt and use objects from related periods to express a mixed national life.

The chapters on historic periods have been given principally to show the qualities for which they stand and our need to assimilate these qualities, whatever their period name is. This does not mean that a person should not be individual in his colour choice, and personal in his likes and dislikes, as well as quite natural in his selection of forms and decorative effects. It means that the more he knows what others have done, the more he will know what not to do, as well as what to do, and it also means that the less he limits himself to one colour scheme, one furniture style, one decorative idea, the broader becomes his concept, the wider his experience and the more versatile and refined his expression.

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It is true, we have emerged from the Victorian Era and its black walnut, marble-top offspring. But many of the objects which we, as Americans, associate with the Victorian period are still with us, or cheaper representations of them are, even though we have said fond farewells to the marble-top chamber suit and the plush parlour chairs.

It is not an uncommon thing to see in rooms otherwise quite possible an accumulation of small articles supposed to be decorative or useful, ranging all the way from dried grass and cat-tails to knit tidies and piano covers. These aggregations include unnecessary and undecorative vases, statuettes, hand-painted objects and other sentimental belongings.

Since this field of unnecessary personal objects is unlimited, since the affection and regard in which these objects are sometimes held is so sacred, and since people positively intelligent in most things refuse to show a sign of common sense where these are concerned, the only thing we can do is to arouse those who are responsible for such things to a thoughtful consideration of their qualities. No two persons being alike, no two methods will apply to any one person. Each person must, however, look about and see what things he has that are useless, inexpressive of anything except himself, and capable only of collecting and harbouring dust. When he has decided this let him eliminate what he will and start anew. Thus a decorative scheme may have its birth.

Out of repeated right experience comes knowledge. Knowledge is power, and power to use external material things to express ideas is the end and aim of material





A MODERN LIBRARY WHOSE LUXURIOUS DECORATIVE CHARM LIES IN ITS UNITY OF TREATMENT. THE WALLS, CEILING AND FLOOR, WITH THE UPHOLSTERY MATERIAL, ARE SO SCALED AND ARRANGED THAT NO ONE THING APPEARS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHERS. THE LAMPS AND THEIR PLACING EMPHASIZE THE DECORATIVE FEELING.





A MODERN DRAWING-ROOM IN WHICH THE FURNITURE SHOWS GOOD FUNCTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENT. AN EXCELLENT DECORATIVE EMPHASIS IN THE TREATMENT OF THE CHIMNEY PIECE AND ITS WALL.



life. To choose an article without a knowledge and feeling for its fitness and beauty is unwise. To choose it without considering it in its relation to its background and to each of the other objects with which it will be used in a room is worse. The failure to test one's arrangement by the principles of form is often the cause of a failure to make the most of whatever one has. Knowledge grows as one demonstrates what he has already learned. Nothing is thoroughly understood until it can be consciously demonstrated.

It has been the purpose of this chapter to call the reader's attention to the wonderful opportunity that the interior decorator and the house maker has to create an environment which will be the means of a higher state of æsthetic appreciation in the generation that is to follow. It has also been our aim to point out the stumbling-blocks to a full realization of an æsthetic ideal in furnishing and to incite a determination to make a beginning in the direction of overcoming these obstacles. It is further designed to arouse a desire to investigate the fundamental principles which govern form and decoration, and to use these principles daily in our selections and in our arrangements until, unconsciously, what we touch shall express a new state of personal consciousness in which good taste is not a thought-out act but an unconscious, irresistible impulse in all we do.



## PART III

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE INDIVIDUAL HOUSE

IT is preposterous to think that there can be a class of set formulæ given by which any and every room may be properly planned. One meets, however, those who want such formulæ and those who are quite willing to give them. This creates a situation quite like that in which a patent medicine is put on the market with the assurance that it will cure every human ill, when, as a matter of fact, it is probably inadequately adapted to even one badly disordered state.

The house is an individual thing. Each room in it is individual, for the varied functions of the rooms and the personal differences of those who may use them all influence each particular element in the unit.

To say that a dining-room should be in this or that colour scheme, with this or that style of furniture, is not only absurd but entirely misleading as to what interior furnishing means. What is true of the dining-room is no less true of the living-room, the sleeping-room, the library, or other rooms in which the personal element is concerned.

What one can do, however, is to stick fast to the principles which govern all forms of expression, and then use his intelligence, and that of his advisory decorator, to make the elements that go to make up the room



ONE'S OWN ROOM SHOULD EXPRESS THE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF HIS PERSONALITY.



A. BEDROOM OF MARIE ANTOINETTE; LITTLE TRIANON.

B. BEDROOM OF LOUIS XIV AT VERSAILLES.

C. BED OF QUEEN ELIZABETH OF ENGLAND.

COMPARE THE QUALITIES WHICH ARE FOUND TO BE PROMINENT IN THE CHARACTER OF EACH PERSON WITH THE QUALITIES EXPRESSED BY THE ROOMS AND THEIR FURNISHINGS.



an expression of the personality of the one for whom the room is planned. When principle takes the place of fad or formula and impersonal qualities are seen as a media of expression, personality will find no difficulty in manifesting itself in any room under any conditions.

Each house is the natural expression of an individual's idea of functional fitness, beauty in environment and good taste. Function or fitness is the fundamental idea of the room. There is a tendency frequently to let other elements creep in which in themselves are not bad, but which destroy the functional idea for which the object stands.

For example, sentimental souvenirs, or decorative objects, are allowed to occupy space in the room that one can ill afford to give to such trash. These objects also are frequently placed upon tables, pianos, cabinets, dressers and the like in such a way that the real function of the object on which they are placed is completely obscured. Mirrors cannot be used, drawers opened or shut, pianos closed or opened, tables used for any practical purpose, without moving these senseless things.

How often lamps or other lighting features are so placed that it is impossible to read or sew by them. In the same way hangings and curtains are so placed that windows no longer admit light or serve to protect from outside observers; chairs bear no relation to tables so far as reading, writing or other work is concerned. In short, the acquisition or the placing of objects functional or beautiful in such a way that they do not fully express their use idea is in bad taste. To destroy the functional feature of an object by the addition of a less important

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one or by a bad placing of that one is neither sensible, economical nor artistic.

The first essential in the individual room is the judgment necessary to ascertain that every object in it is so placed that it does its own work in the most efficient manner. Until each object is so placed the room is not right, however individual it may seem. It must be clear that no formula can be given for this. A writer or author requires a table, perhaps a desk, chairs and other material in quite different relations to each other and to lighting than the person who uses the same type of room for visiting purposes or as a reading-room or library.

The dining-room in the moderate house is sometimes used for other purposes. In this case function demands quite a different arrangement of the table, chairs, light, sideboard and other articles.

It is well to raise the question as to whether every article in the individual room you have in mind meets as nearly as possible the criterion you have of functional fitness. If it does, it matters not whether you are a musician, an artist, an author, a seamstress, a lawyer or a doctor—the room is in harmony with your life work, which is yourself, and will become personal when you know how to express yourself in terms of colour, form, line and texture.

Beauty is the quality of harmonious relationships. A formula to produce it does not exist. But principles of harmony in colour, line, form, texture and arrangement do exist and no two people can interpret them alike. Nor will they do so if these principles become unconscious working elements of the mind. Accept,

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SIMPLE DECORATIVE CHOICE AND ARRANGEMENT OF MATERIALS,  
EXPRESSING THE QUALITIES OF FEMININE REFINEMENT AND GOOD  
TASTE, IN A MODERN BEDROOM. VERY INDIVIDUAL.





BEDROOM IN SUBURBAN HOUSE, EXPRESSING QUaintNESS AND A CHARM OF DECORATIVE ARRANGEMENT. EMPHASIZED BY ITS SIMPLICITY, DECORATIVE COLOURINGS AND PLACINGS OF PICTURES IN STRUCTURAL UNITY WITH ROOM STRUCTURE AND FURNITURE PLACING. AVOID TRIANGULAR WIRES. PERSONAL QUaintNESS.



then, the fact that beauty is harmony. Learn next what things are harmonious. Use, in the third place, such elements as express your idea, personal and individual, of the function included in your room idea. As far as you can, demonstrate these principles; beauty will result.

It matters not in what field one works, conscious, constant right choice and right usage is good taste. Just as one improves in manners by habitual practice, though a tendency to these may be inborn or not, just so one improves his taste in colour by habitual choice and use of the best within his knowledge.

Let us not be satisfied, then, with any expression that happens to come along which rests the body, gratifies sentimentality or seems cheap. Be willing to go without rather than have a bad thing and one will grow in good taste.

Many who would not talk too loudly in public or parade their own personal grievances in conversation do not hesitate to do so in a living-room or dining-room. Further analogies might be given, but this is sufficient for any one to see that rooms, except very personal ones, like bedrooms or boudoirs, are not the places in which to exploit one's idiosyncrasies. Impersonal treatment of impersonal objects will seem personal enough to the varied kinds and types of people who must come and go in the ordinary room.

In every problem, however, there are certain things—we shall call them premises—that may well form part of the foundation plan for decorating any room. No one of these is more important than geography. Any room in Florida presents a different problem from



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the same room in the Adirondack Mountains. The town house with its imperfect light, coming, perhaps, from two directions, perhaps one, is quite another problem from the country house with its open fields and adequate light from all sides. The problem of the house on the hill and the one in the valley presents two different aspects in the matter of colour and form. Trees close to the house, dense shrubbery and other objects change the plan from the very outset.

In the hot, sunny South there is the problem of getting air and excluding the burning sun. In the extreme North there is the air to come in but cold to be kept out while the sun is admitted. This has a decided influence on the placement, size and number of windows, and the location and arrangement of doors, halls and the like, and also upon the shutters, hangings and window accessories.

The side of the house on which the room is located is also of importance. The south and southeast, with their almost continuous sun, call for a choice of cooler colours. The northwest, on the contrary, with its generally cold gray light, requires warmer and more luscious colour than the southeast, or even the southwest, of the same house.

This is a matter of function only. The Southern house must be comfortable perhaps the year round, with the temperature above normal. It must not only physically and structurally be so made that air can be easily circulated without admitting too much heat or light, but colour must be chosen which is an antidote or complement to the extreme heat of the atmosphere. Warm rich reds, oranges and yellows are inappropriate



A SUCCESSFUL ADAPTATION OF THE LATE GOTHIC AND RENAISSANCE IN A MODERN CITY HOUSE, RESULTING IN THE EXPRESSION OF EXTREME REFINEMENT, SIMPLE ELEGANCE AND PERFECT TASTE. PERSONAL.



## THE INDIVIDUAL HOUSE

where the temperature expresses the same quality. Greens, blue greens, blues, violets and some yellows may be used in warm temperatures.

The reverse of this is true in the Northern house, in which the climatic conditions are directly opposite, and something of the same result is sought. Make colour do the work which the climatic condition does not; let it act on consciousness as a supplement to what is being forced on us through the senses. This is what colour is for. Its function is to stimulate certain ideas in the mind, either consciously or unconsciously. Thus it produces a pleasurable æsthetic sensation and also has a neutralizing effect upon other sensations.

The city house must be treated in colour in precisely the same way: the north side in warm colours, the south in cooler. This does not mean that full intense colours, or even half intense, in any of these tones must be used, but it does mean that if the cool colours dominate in the southern exposures and the warm ones in the northern exposures, there is a feeling of equality, consistency and harmony in the house unit that cannot be obtained otherwise.

This rule has many modifications. For example, some persons must have more intense colour about them than others. Some believe they cannot exist unless they have a blue, a red or a green room, believing that, temperamentally, they require something of the kind. There are many other things that influence this general statement but, in the main, the rule should be followed.

If one is to spend only the summer months in a

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country house, and if the climate during that time is warm, nothing is more helpful in obtaining comfort than rooms in light, cool colours. Let the blues, greens and their hues dominate; let the yellows be neutralized to an old ivory, and introduce only sufficient warm colour to give the personal and exciting note necessary to vitalize the room.

These general geographical situations are the first thing to consider in furnishing and decorating any room in the house. A decorator or an owner who attempts to select a trim, a wall paper, or a rug without first asking himself how many windows there are in the room, from what direction the light comes, how much sun the room gets, and what part of the day it gets it, has omitted the one thing which will help him to decide on a right background. On the other hand, it is as essential to know whether a room is to be used during the entire year or a portion of it, and whether sunlight is obscured by nearby bushes or other buildings, as it is to know whether it is a dining-room, a bedroom or a living-room that is to be furnished.

Geography, then, plays an important part, and affects even the choice of material out of which a house is to be built. If the house is to appear as a part of the landscape surrounding it, it must be built of something which seems to have some connection with that landscape. In some places white marble is out of place; in others brick and other kinds of stone are equally so. Sometimes a wooden house is remote from the idea of the landscape. Whenever this is the case, it is quite impossible to harmonize the house with the grounds and with the more remote accessories of





A YOUNG MAN'S BEDROOM WITH BACKGROUNDS OF WALL PAPER AND RUG EXPRESSING RESTFULNESS AND QUIET. GROUPING OF FURNITURE FROM THE STANDPOINTS OF USE AND DECORATIVE EFFECTS. INDIVIDUAL TYPE.





ANOTHER CORNER OF THE SAME BEDROOM, ILLUSTRATING CON-  
VENIENCE AND DECORATIVE PLACINGS AND WINDOW DECORATIVE  
TREATMENT.



## THE INDIVIDUAL HOUSE

which it becomes a related part. Harmony between the landscape and the house is fundamentally important from the standpoint of the exterior.

Another important premise is the function of the room. If one has decided to paper several rooms in his house, and he visits a wall-paper shop with this in mind, he will often find a salesman who displays his wares, declaring: "We are using these papers this season more than any others," or, "This colour is all the rage." Sometimes, too, textures figure as yearly fads. Japanese grass cloths, glazed papers, foliage, matted surface, etc., all have had their day. The function of the room is a question that is fundamental and has nothing to do with what is selling best or what is newest.

If a paper is for a bedroom, let it express the bedroom idea of sleep and rest. The value of the paper, light or dark, is a matter of taste, sometimes a matter affected by the age of the occupant. It may also be modified in value by the amount of light in the room and by the fact of being a country house or a town house. But two things are essential in this room—rest and sleep—and it matters not what the style is, these qualities should be present. If the hue is to be decided by the direction and amount of light admitted to the room, by the objects that are already there, and by the personal preference of the occupant of the room, there are three influences any one of which may be entirely antagonistic to the other two. Who shall decide which one to sacrifice? Rest and sleep comes first—then personal choice without doubt.

If the room has very little light, the colour may be a little more intense than it otherwise should be, but the



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background colour is fixed by the law of background, not personal whim. Neither southern exposures nor the vogue of the day will make a too intense background right for rest or sleep in any house.

Function, then, is fundamental wherever a room is, or whoever occupies it. What is true of one of a type of room is true of the others of the same type.

Another obstacle that often interferes with the selection of material has been somewhat discussed in the previous chapter. This is the fact that objects already in the room must be retained there as associates of the new ones. The study of historic periods shows one so clearly the quality value of every article of furniture that one should be familiar with furnishings as quality expressions. The straight-lined architectural features of an Italian chair or a Mission desk present a firm, unrelenting, yet simple quality effect which should immediately be recognized. The qualities of an object should be detected at sight. Everything in furniture and furnishing means something. This elemental meaning is the expression of an idea, and it is quite simple to find other ideas which in combination express a whole.

Some of us remember a game played with letters of the alphabet cut and pasted on small cardboard squares. One way of using these was to take a certain number of letters and see how many words could be made out of these letters. Another was to take a certain word and see how many other words could be made from the letters of that word. Each letter in each case expressed an idea. The word "simple," for example, contains six letters, each different in its meaning and form from the other five. If any four of these letters were



A MODERN DINING-ROOM WHOSE STRENGTH IS ITS SIMPLICITY, RESTFULNESS, DIGNITY AND CONSISTENCY. NOTICE THE CHARM OF A VARIETY PRODUCED BY SIDE CHAIRS AND BY THE RUG AND MANTLE DECORATIONS AND SURFACE OF RIGHT WALL. STRONG PERSONAL QUALITIES.



given, and one were asked to make the completed word "simple," he would find no difficulty in supplying the other two letters from the collection.

This is precisely what should be done in interior decoration. Take account of stock before you paper the wall, buy new hangings, or add a chair, a desk or a table. Determine what you want your room to express when it is done, and then there are two different things to remember: first, buy the thing which you know supplies one of the missing letters in your word, and do not buy anything that does not supply it; in the second place, remember that when you have supplied the two letters, there are no more letters needed, and if you find a cheap object, or even a beautiful one, that is not required to complete your word, it is superfluous and never can be a part of your original idea. You decided that when you selected the word "simple" instead of "Constantinople" as your room idea.

If people would see this much, there would be no very bad rooms, so far as putting new objects with those already acquired is concerned.

Remember, then, that a scale quality which is ponderous and heavy must not be supplemented with an object which is light, informal and tiny, except there be some middle grounds in which a scale is found that relates these two different things. Great divergence in colour relationships in textures, size, shapes and line directions must be harmonized in the same way. This is done by remembering the Greek law and the subtle relationships which it makes possible. A reversion to principle is always safe in forming a critical judgment in the field of applied arts.

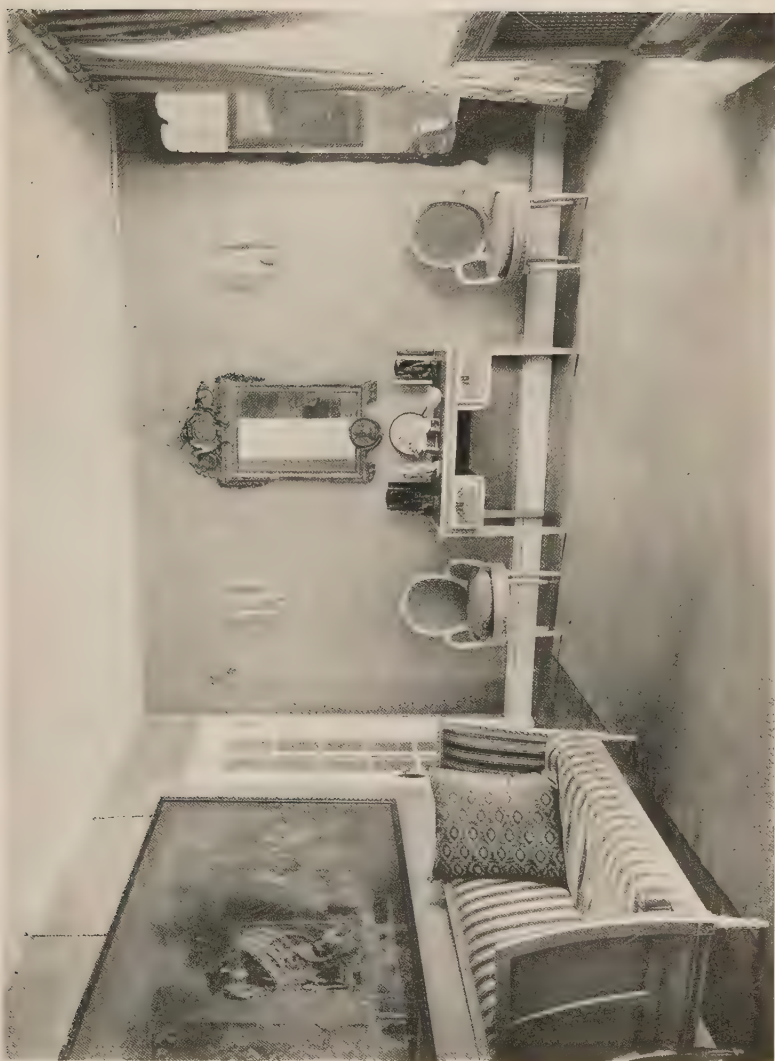
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The room quality which causes most discussion is personality. It is hard to believe that another's personality is as important as one's own. It is still harder to believe that some one else may have a more pleasing conception of anything than we have ourselves. Remember that a room to live in and one to look at are two things and that you do not have to live in every room you see or create.

Many interior decorators err in supposing that because they have succeeded in developing a type of room which has been called beautiful and successful, they can apply the same treatment to any room. It is astounding how many decorators plan other people's rooms while thinking about themselves. This is analogous to the case of a physician who begins his diagnosis by introspection, determining first the state of his own internal organs. Then, having decided how he himself feels, advises his client what to take.

The matter of personality is more important than geography, functional fitness or old things which must be retained. It is more important because every person is more interested in himself than he is in anything else—try as he may to be otherwise. He wants something, and knowing what he wants, believes that he has a right to express that want. The skillful decorator finds out all he possibly can of the personal characteristics of his client, his likes and dislikes, natural tendencies and idiosyncrasies, before he shows him any wall cover or discusses the cost of furniture. By the way, this question of cost is the last thing to mention. A few moments' conversation will usually show whether a client likes red or blue, and should also disclose





A MODERN FEMININE SITTING-ROOM RESTRAINED, RESTFUL THROUGH BALANCE, DECORATIVE IN ARRANGEMENT, WITH FURNISHINGS BEAUTIFULLY RELATED TO BACKGROUND CHOICE. NOTE PARTICULARLY DECORATIVE APPEARANCE OF THE LEFT-HAND WALL, AND USE OF CORBELLED LINES IN CHAIR BACKS, MIRROR, FIXTURES AND MEDALLIONS. EXTREMELY INDIVIDUAL.





MAN'S LIVING-ROOM AND LIBRARY, SHOWING THE SUCCESSFUL COMBINATION OF ITALIAN, FRENCH AND ENGLISH MATERIALS ARRANGED THROUGH THE PRINCIPLES OF DECORATIVE TREATMENT TO EXPRESS UTILITY, REST AND BEAUTY. CLARM IN SMALL NOTES OF INTENSE COLOUR WITH WARM GRAY BACKGROUND AND WALNUT FURNITURE. STRONG PERSONAL QUALITIES.



## THE INDIVIDUAL HOUSE

whether she ought to have it or not. Manifest antagonism is not the method by which to obtain the desired result, but a gradual elimination of one idea and the substitution of another. This is tact.

What is true of colour is apparently so in other fields. Some personalities are expressed in erratic motions; such persons, for their peace of mind, should be set in a perfectly balanced, well-held and consistent room. To so lead and influence the client that he believes the room to be arranged according to his own idea is the work of the clever decorator. When the right setting for the personality is attained, the client is, almost without exception, pleased, even though he may have rebelled during the process.

The essentials of a room are far too significant to permit a personal fancy to interfere with right usage. The matter of backgrounds, the method of hanging curtains, the consistent structural arrangement of furniture, modifications of this structure by the freer elements, the balanced arrangement for rest and the proper placement of decorative objects are not open to personal whim. They are governed by common sense and the laws of choice and arrangement which are fundamental in any right design. But the final hue choice in colour, how dark or how light the room shall be, or what shall be the dominating characteristic of the room, are questions for personal choice.

The personal touch, too, is shown, or should be, in the smaller articles in the room, which by their choice and placement indicate the character of the occupant. This personal touch is found in the selection, framing and hanging of pictures, although the way they are



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hung and framed is largely a matter of impersonal choice.

The personal touch again is felt in the selection and arrangement of flowers. Both these subjects will be treated later in detail, but a person who habitually selects and uses lilies is a very different person from one who uses carnations, or one who would chose American beauty roses—not to mention orchids.

A few photographs, too, if properly framed add a personal touch to the quality of a living-room. Pieces of pottery or other decorative objects sometimes give just the note that makes the room the visible expression of the inward thought of the person who occupies the room.

Personality should not interfere with the fundamentals of selection or arrangement which are necessary to good taste. The larger facts are not determined by personal preference, but the way in which they are interpreted varies with personality, and the smaller or more decorative objects in the room may be very personal if they are not ostentatiously displayed, or if there are not too many of them in too prominent a place.

The same thing is true of people. In the main, our friends are all alike. The fundamental facts of their structure, mental and physical, and of their decorative qualities, mental and physical, are the same. Personal traits do not change fundamental facts. It is, however, essential that decorators should understand not only their business but their clients. Those, also, who have houses should not understand themselves and their own whims alone, they should also understand the laws which govern choice and arrangement in all houses.

## PART III

## CHAPTER XVII

### SOME SPECIAL SUGGESTIONS

#### CHOICE, FRAMING AND HANGING PICTURES, HANGING CURTAINS, METHODS OF LIGHTING, CHOICE OF DECORATIVE OBJECTS, GENERAL PLACEMENT

FOR many years pictures alone were regarded as fine art. Art study meant picture painting, while art appreciation was synonymous with picture discussion. The realization that art quality in pictures is identical with art quality in chairs and rugs has been gradual. This realization will lead to a better choice and a more consistent use of pictures in interior decoration. One needs to have not only a feeling for a beautiful picture, but a sense of its fitness as a wall decoration, and of its harmony with any type of furnishings to be used with it.

During the historical periods painting developed with other branches of art. The High Renaissance in Italy found expression for its qualities in pictures, furniture, textiles and other art objects simultaneously. The painters of the days of Louis XV, like Watteau and Fragonard, expressed precisely the qualities in their pictures that the cabinetmakers, the textile weavers and the metal workers expressed in their fields. Thus

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are periods clearly defined, but it is sufficient for us to see the correspondence between pictures and other objects of art expressing the same idea.

Strictly period rooms should have strictly period pictures; not always pictures painted in that period, for many period pictures, like period furniture, were poor expressions of the period idea; but what they should have is a picture whose spirit and feeling are precisely that expressed by the other articles in use during that period. In rooms, however, in which the strict period idea is not intended, a wider range of picture choice is possible. There is no reason, however, for a wild and unrelated choice in pictures any more than in other decorative objects. The same harmony of idea should be apparent that is felt in any other quality that the room expresses. These are the fundamental points in the choice of pictures for interior decoration.

Another and closely related element is the medium in which the picture is expressed. There are oils, water colours, prints, photographs, etchings and steel engravings. These textures have about the same relation to each other that burlap, linen, cotton bed-ticking, chiffon and cane-seated chairs have. It is impossible to harmonize them all in the one room, or, in fact, to bring any two or three of them closely together.

If there is one oil painting in the ordinary room, it is a delicate matter to introduce any other picture in any other medium. Of course, it is possible that a water colour might be broadly enough treated and of a subject closely enough allied to make it possible. A photograph of an oil painting, similarly treated, in a similar

spirit, might be, under some conditions, used. Very rarely is it possible to combine any of these excepting prints with photographs, etchings with steel engravings, or, occasionally, a water colour with oil.

Too many pictures together in any media indicate bad taste. We can learn much from the Japanese in that regard. They hang one picture at a time of the right size in the right place and, after having enjoyed that for some time, change it for another, and another; but they never present their pictures in herds or droves.

As to frames, what they are and what they should be, volumes could be written. The birth and evolution of the picture frame is a subject that no one has, so far, exploited. The function of the frame is to hold the picture in place, demark it slightly from the wall on which it is hung, but still relate it to the wall, and make easy the transition from it to the picture. When a picture frame does this, and in no way detracts from the picture itself, it is good. When it attracts attention by its garish glitter, its erratic ornament, or its prodigious size, at the expense of the picture itself, it is one of the surest indexes of bad taste on the part of the owner.

Whatever is on the wall is a part of it or it is not decorative. Right here let it be said that those frames which project forward like an unnatural growth cease to be decorative. One feels them to be a thing separate from the wall itself. In the good days, when pictures were really decorations, they were either painted on the wall, painted to fit wall spaces, or hung in panels or other spots to which they were suited in size and shape. Of late, owing to the influence of the Decadent Renais-

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sance, they have been surrounded by ornate, vulgar and expensive gilt frames whose only excuse for being was their showiness and their cost. The sooner this over-ornamented style in picture frames is eliminated, the sooner pictures will take their rightful place as a factor in the decorative idea. It is because of these abuses that pictures have fallen somewhat into disuse by all good decorators and most sensible house furnishers.

For years the gilt frame held the field. Of late there has been a decided improvement, and when gilt is used it is now toned either warm or cool, and very much dulled, so that it seems, in many instances, to relate, somewhat, to the picture itself, being similarly keyed. Quite frequently, even now, it is not sufficiently keyed so that it has any relation to the wall surface upon which it is hung. Both the picture and the wall should be taken into consideration in the choice of a frame with reference to its value and intensity relationship.

The motifs of decoration upon gilt picture frames are generally of a historic character, some Florentine, some French and others Flemish. These motifs are the same that appeared in furniture and other art objects and, of course, are expressive of the period ideas for which they stood. It is a strange fancy to have taken these historic motifs, enlarged them and made them more prominent, and then to have worked them into a picture frame. These frames are often of totally unrelated periods, and are used on pictures expressing ideas so foreign to those expressed by the motifs that they are quite antagonistic in character.

Frequently a Decadent Renaissance frame is seen about such a picture as a Millet, or a French Louis XV



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frame on a Holbein. What could be more ridiculous than such combinations as these, and why will the intelligent public submit to such things because a picture framer or a so-called artist does not know any better? This is a field in which the common sense of the public can be relied upon to make a change as soon as it is aroused to a consciousness of the truth.

Water colours are sometimes well framed in dull, flat gilt frames, and sometimes in wooden ones. Japanese prints are generally good in dead black, flat wood mouldings. In photographs there is a very wide range. Browns are the favoured tones. The frames should be wood, in the same hue, not more intense, and of a value a little lighter than the darkest tone in the picture. This will always produce an agreeable result.

The size, width and strength of the mouldings depend upon several things and are too much a question of feeling to admit of a hard and fast rule. Large, single objects require a wider and stronger frame than delicate small ones in the same picture size. Violent motions of water, trees or animals require a stronger sustaining power than the subdued or quiet sunset or May-day farm scenes. Strong and vivid colour requires a stronger frame than neutral and finely blended combinations. Where strength and motif action prevail there width and prominence in frame appear; where quiet, closely harmonious combinations exist, a less powerful frame or support is required. Usually the frames selected are too wide and, more often than not, too much ornamented and too brilliant or intense in colour.

The matted picture has had its day. Only in rare instances now is it used. An occasional water colour,

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for example, a gem or jewel, being too tiny to frame, is placed upon a mat that is quite inconspicuous and related in tone to both the water colour and the frame about it. This makes an easy transition from the picture to the frame. The same thing may be said of etchings. Photographs and prints are no longer mounted on mats but are framed, as they should be, close to the picture.

The fallacy of mounting small photographs or other pictures on two or more colours, or of leaving a white or a black streak around the photograph to form another frame has long since been felt. One moulding or frame is sufficient in most instances. In rare cases a narrow gilt edge inside the wood is permissible. The intense red and green as well as the pure white mats of the olden days are gone forever, with the rest of their Victorian associates.

Hanging pictures is an art. In general, oils and other large pictures should be hung, when possible, so that the eye of the average person standing will be about opposite the centre of the picture. This is as high as pictures under ordinary circumstances can be hung. Reference has before been made to the way they should be hung. If wire or cord be used, let two appear, each parallel with the side of the frame, and each extending, in harmony with other vertical lines, to a hook at the picture moulding. Make this hanging just as inconspicuous as possible. Tension the wires to the wall if possible so that they are practically invisible. Anything which serves to emphasize the wire or picture hook is not only ugly but inconsistent.

When pictures are to be hung in groups they must

be very carefully chosen. Most of us have small photographs or other pictures so personal that we think we cannot part with them and must hang them. We have no place on the wall suited to them in size or shape. We must, therefore, put two or three together, though this should be done as rarely as possible. Several groups of these upon a wall are non-decorative and generally express bad form. When groups are to be hung, say two or three, there are two things vitally important: first, the tops of these pictures must be on a straight line; second, they must be hung quite close together, say two or three inches apart, so that they seem easily to unite and form one decorative spot. To scatter or spatter them about is to use the whole decorative effect as a wall spot. These are generally better framed to stand on a table or cabinet than to arrange as wall decorations.

An important question is what shall appear under pictures if they are hung upon a wall. Sometimes we see them hung without any relation whatever to furniture pieces, that is, they are hung in any place on the wall where there seems to be a bare spot. A picture of any considerable size with a frame of any perceptible weight is not very decorative on the wall unless directly under it is some article of furniture to which it seems to belong. A picture should be hung for example over a cabinet or console. The picture alone would be an impossible excrescence, but if some articles are used on the cabinet or console which bring the group somewhere near the picture, then the console, the decorative articles and the picture together form an agreeable decorative group.

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Pictures must be hung flat to the wall in order to form a part of the wall. There is only one excuse for allowing them to dip at the top, and that is that they may get a better light. This, however, does not in the least influence the matter of decoration. When pictures are hung in this way the room exists for the picture, and not the picture for the room, for they are not decoratively placed when they are so hung.

Let us try to select pictures that are in subject, in treatment and in framing, harmonious with each other and also with the various objects we are using with them in the room. Let us look to it that they are properly hung—flat, with two wires, if any—properly grouped, and related to other objects by their placement in the room. Under such conditions few pictures are essential in most rooms. Too many pictures have as bad an effect as too many of anything else, and a bad treatment of pictures is worse than a bad treatment of other things, because pictures are more capable of extremes in good and bad than most articles, and there are more ways to misuse them because of their great range possibility. The greatest care is necessary then to limit the number, carefully decide the treatment, or, when in doubt, use none.

Next in importance to the background of a room is the matter of its curtains or hangings. From one viewpoint they are really a part of the background. From another angle, however, they are more than this: they are the first decorative idea used with the walls and trim as a background for them. A discussion of curtains and hangings involves two questions: what to hang and how to hang it.

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While no specific rules can be given as to what shall be used, some hints may be helpful. In the first place, there is the question of their relation to the function of the window. If my room is already too dark or too light, I must choose my hangings with this as a modifying idea. If considerable latitude in this regard is possible, then less attention should be given to the thinness or thickness and the general textural weight of the material used.

The question of lighting also affects the colour. It must be remembered that yellow produces light; black absorbs it. Blues, reds and violets are nearer black and, therefore, more powerful in absorbing colour than in reflecting it. All this must be considered before the colour is finally determined.

Hangings must also be considered as a decorative note. If the walls are proper backgrounds—plain, simple and free from objects which attract undue attention—the curtains may be stronger in colour and more striking in pattern, and still be of a most fascinating decorative quality.

Printed linens, damasks, brocades, brocatelles, etc., according to the character of the room, may be used with simple backgrounds to produce a simple decorative effect. If the patterns show a floral treatment the decorative effect is better when the curtains are drawn aside, thus presenting a charming colour effect without the introduction of the naturalistic idea in a too prominent way.

If more than one set of curtains is to be hung, the inner pair may be net, fine plain lace, thin silk or case-ment cloth, according to the textural quality needed in the design idea. The outer or heavy hanging,



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which is more within the room, may be of any of the heavy materials before mentioned. This outer hanging serves three purposes: it adds a note of richness and elegance to the decorative idea, it may be used to regulate the amount of light during the daytime, and when closely drawn at night gives to the room an air of seclusion and privacy as well as richness that is hard to obtain in any other way.

How to hang curtains is a little harder to determine. Window trims and other extenuating circumstances differ so radically that a general law is likely to be misapplied. Sometimes woodwork is so bad in colour, or so hideous in treatment, that it is a joy to arrange the heavy hangings in such a way that the window trim is entirely covered. This is true sometimes of doors. If the windows are particularly small in scale for the room, this same treatment may be used to advantage. When a note of larger decorative area is desirable, it may be attained in this way also.

In general, however, the inside curtain—that is, the one next the glass—should be hung inside the window casing. This is done by extending a small brass rod across the top well within the window casing toward the glass. If cords and travellers are obtainable, the inner curtain should be plaited in single plaits at intervals, so that when the curtains are hung in place they will exactly fill the window space when drawn together in the centre. This allows the curtain to hang in folds regularly arranged and pleasingly placed. When the curtains are drawn, the window space is filled and, when pulled apart, the curtain easily adjusts itself in a decorative way.

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The material should be arranged with a heading at the top, stiffened in some way so that it obscures the brass pins which are fastened into the back of the curtain. On the rod there are small brass rings into which these pins are fastened and the mechanics of the curtain are hidden by the heading at the top. The curtains should be of such a length that they just escape the window sill. They may be pulled close or left wide open without any effort; and they fit their space and place as a decorative idea.

In hanging curtains one should always bear in mind that the function of the window must not be interfered with; neither must the function of the curtain. The material must be so arranged that the largest measure of decorative effect is obtained. The above suggestions, if followed, will lead to this result.

Sometimes the outer or heavy hangings may also be hung within the window casing in the same way as the inner hangings, excepting that the former should be placed near the edge of the casing toward the room. When the rod is placed at the extreme outer edges of the casing, it should be raised far enough toward the top to conceal the casing. In this case, small brackets are used which will be covered by the hanging.

The same era that produced clumsy picture frames, gorgeous and ostentatious, and produced badly proportioned grills and other atrocities, invented also the wooden curtain pole, with its brass ends and other trimmings. Discard these and all objects of their kind as impossible to the decorative sense. The brass rods should be no larger than is essential to perform their function. If possible, they should be dulled in

colour until they are unobtrusive and show little against the background. The rings, pins and other trappings should be kept on the side nearest the glass and out of sight, as all other machinery must be where art or decorative quality is concerned.

It may be inferred from this that two sets of curtains are generally desirable. This is not always the case. In some places, and under some conditions, window shades or blinds are essential. It is a pity that this is so because of their extreme ugliness. When they are used they should be kept rolled up and out of sight, excepting when performing their necessary function. With two sets of curtains it is less necessary to use shades.

There are times also when the window is so small, the lighting capacity so inadequate, and the scale of the room and furniture so light that it is a mistake to have more than one pair of hangings. In an extreme case of this kind a thin net or muslin might answer the purpose. If a shade or blind is used, this should be hung within the casing.

Probably no one material is as effective in as many ways and under as varied conditions for a single curtain as what is known as English casement cloth. This is good in the country, in the town house, in the North and in the South. It is available for a moderate price and is good enough to use almost anywhere.

When one pair of curtains is used, almost without exception, these curtains should stop at the casement line. With the two pairs, the preference is for the heavy hangings to escape the floor by an inch or two. This is decorative and hygienic.

It must be borne in mind, whatever the problem is,

that the right idea in hangings is of the first importance in interior decoration after the background has been determined.

It may be wise, while discussing the hangings as they relate to the window trim, to say something in regard to the treatment of wood as it is a part of the background. Wood may be considered from two points of view only: first, the natural wood, and second an artificial treatment of it.

There was a time when it was considered a sin to obscure in any way a natural grain or other unusual and oftentimes ugly marks which nature had impressed on wood. A grain had to be brought out clearly and distinctly. Besides this, it was varnished or glazed until it appeared like wood under glass. Not so many years ago we even went so far as to paint the surface of wood, imitating its colour and streaking it with fine tooth and coarse tooth combs, creating grains more grotesque and improbable than original ones could be. This insincere attempt to copy nature is the worst of all.

In any kind of wood there are beautiful and ugly pieces. The beautiful ones are the characteristic ones which are not grotesque miscarriages in nature. These woods—often beautiful in colour, charming in texture and pleasing withal—may be made ugly by any of the treatments above mentioned. Let them be treated in an oil or French finish in such a way that their salient qualities appear, their texture is in no way disturbed and their surface looks like wood, neither glass nor any other material being suggested by it. This is the proper treatment for natural wood.

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Often it is impossible to arrive at decorative effects without changing materially the colour of the wood; still natural wood or unpainted wood has its place in the decorative idea. Certain methods of staining wood are successful in keying it to backgrounds which must be used if the idea of the room is not destroyed. Great care should be taken, however, that an impossible wood colour is not used if the wood is to show its grain and look natural in all but its colour. If the conventional stain is used it must in some way conventionalize the other qualities of the wood in order that they should be harmonious.

The second treatment of wood I shall call artificial. During periods in history that have reached high states of social charm, where manners, customs and life expressions were more or less artificial, it has been found necessary to do away with the grains and other natural qualities of wood in order that it, too, should express the same artificial life.

In the Baroque Renaissance gilt treatment became a craze. Fruits, vegetables, wood and persons—all were done in gilt. This necessitated the covering of wood with gold leaf that unity in treatment might obtain. The periods of Louis XIII and XIV are exuberant with artificial woods made so by the gilt treatment. During the periods of Louis XV and XVI, as well as the English periods of Hepplewhite and Adam, paint and enamel was found to be a suitable material for expressing the artificial idea.

Painted woods did not longer claim to be woods. They represented an artificial surface, structural perhaps in its form, decorative in its appearance but veiled



or hidden as to its actual material. This is perfectly legitimate and when followed consistently forms one of the most attractive and most flexible treatments of wood so far as interior decoration is concerned.

A room can often be given a suitable background if an ordinary wall paper, soft and grayed in tone, is supplemented by a trim, either deep ivory white, or, better still, by a colour as nearly as possible like the wall covering. This, with a ceiling the same colour, but one shade lighter, and a floor of the same tone, but darker, is one of the most charming backgrounds imaginable for many types of modern rooms.

To consider wood as trim and not give a word to the use of wood in furniture would be to leave the subject too incomplete.

Some periods expressed themselves most clearly by leaving the wood in its natural state, or nearly so; others treated it so that the naturalistic tendency might be somewhat obscured, while in the later French and English periods the surfaces were entirely covered by gilt or enamel in order that they might be brought into closer harmony with other materials.

Even in a brief treatment of this subject one general statement may be made. In no case, excepting in very refined and artificial Georgian types, and in those Louis XV styles in which a clear and transparent surface was essential, is there reason for varnishing or glazing woods. It is not enough to know that a department store or a furniture factory has turned out pieces with a certain varnished treatment. An expert finish of wood is essential in order that the wood may take its place in the decorative scheme.

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The lighting of a room is of fundamental importance in the general effect. Too much thought cannot be given to the amount of light, its kind and its distribution. In the disposal of daylight we have no present concern, but the matter of artificial lighting is of the utmost importance to every house owner and to every interior decorator. Since colour is light, without it there is no colour, and by it all colour combinations may be impaired. Since the eye sees colour only, light is the element most important in interior decorative effects.

Let us consider some of the ways in which rooms have been lighted. The most impossible thing for the ordinary small room is the central chandelier. The chandelier of Louis XIV and XV with its glass prisms sparkling amidst the lights is an idea that is consistent with the background, furnishings and clothing of the people for whom the setting was planned. This same chandelier idea translated into Jacobean terms is quite another matter. To put it into modern apartment house decoration is an even more difficult problem.

It is not necessary to discuss in detail the hideous things that have been chosen as lighting fixtures. They are in many cases grotesque beyond words. This, however, is not their worst fault. They light a room in such a way that, unless everything is concentrated in the centre of the room, it is impossible to produce pleasing effects, as well as irrational to expect to make use of the lights.

Side bracket lighting is a great improvement over the chandelier, if the room is small enough to get sufficient light in this way. A later invention is called the

indirect lighting system. It has the great advantage of producing a pleasing light on the floor or near it, but also the much greater disadvantage of unduly lighting the last place in the world that should be lighted. Of what use is a brilliantly lighted ceiling, and how can one expect to keep his attention on the lower part of the room when the upper part is brilliantly lighted? Besides being inartistic, it is an unwarranted waste of light. None of these systems so far seems to be adequate in function or beauty. True, an occasional man says he has never seen a room too light. It might be remarked that every one does not need to be knocked down to know that he is hit, neither is it necessary in every case to fire a cannon to make one recognize that a noise has been made. It is equally needless to use all the light it is possible to get to obtain functional fitness or charming combination. What we see depends wholly on what we are and what we see with.

The most successful way of lighting a room is by side lights, well placed, and by lamps—electric or otherwise—distributed judiciously about the room. The size of the room and its function determine largely the number and placement of these lamps. It is possible in such an arrangement to have light enough for any purpose at any time, little enough for comfort and rest when desired, and exactly the right amount in the right place to bring out any group of things in the room or the entire room as may be desired.

These lamps should be placed for reading, sewing, writing, or to call attention to groups of furniture or decorative objects, as the case may be. This—and this way only—is successful in bringing out the charm

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which every living-room should possess in the evening. The shading of these lamps, and the side lights as well, is a matter of great moment. In fact, more depends upon this, probably, than upon the placement of the lamps.

No one colour is always good in all places and under all circumstances, but all soft, neutralized tones of yellow, yellow orange, orange, red orange, yellow green, green and blue green are quite possible under certain conditions. The yellows and orange tones, of course, have the widest range of usefulness. These need not be brilliant in intensity, nor can one say they should be light or dark in value. The texture of the material depends upon the textural decorative idea of the room. Sometimes China silk is light and graceful enough in feeling, and sometimes a brocade, taffeta, damask and even paper parchment has been used with astonishing decorative effect when the texture of the room was considered as a quality in the design.

One thing is almost certain. The shades must be covered not only around the sides but on the top with the material and lined with white. Often two thicknesses of the material are used with the white lining to concentrate the light and throw it down upon the objects one desires to light brilliantly. This soft, soothing light properly distributed about the room makes reading and writing in certain parts of the room a delight, while other portions of the room are lighted in such a manner that rest, calm and repose are the feelings induced.

Lighting, then, should be considered, like everything else, a matter of fitness and a method of tying together the apparently unrelated elements of a

## SOME SPECIAL SUGGESTIONS

room in one unit of keyed colour so that not only beauty, but pleasure through it, is the inevitable outcome.

There is an opportunity for fine distinction in the selection and arrangement of bric-a-brac or ornament. The room, when finished, is a unit, or should be. This does not mean that it should contain one idea only. It means that only such qualities of colour, form, line and texture should be associated together as accord in spirit and are harmonious.

The principles of colour and form as discussed in Part I should aid one in deciding when things are comfortable as parts of a general whole. It does not take a very keen sense of appreciation to see that a picture of the period of Henry II and Marie de Médici is quite out of harmony with a Gothic chest panel or a Gothic figure. Nor does it take much imagination to see that the curved-line, symbolic, and imaginative detail of the Gothic period is quite out of concord with the dancing, sprightly gayety of the curves used in the time of Louis XV.

Sevres ware, in its texture, colour and import, is a part of the period of Louis XV. It is as forbidding with some other pottery or ornament opposed to it in spirit as the other articles of furniture which we have named. Old Chinese pottery of the Ming dynasty is useful in Italian, Early English, Early French and modern rooms to as large an extent as any one ornament type. That is because it is of a refined, subdued colour, graceful shape and no obtrusive design. It would scarcely find a place, however, in the late French or late Georgian styles, where daintiness and light and



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daring treatments are the particular charm of these periods.

It is safe to say that too many such things are used in most rooms. In very luxurious ones this is almost certain to be true. There is an equal chance to overdo this matter in the cheapest kind of material. The department stores and other shops place on sale so much wildly formed, badly covered, cheaply manufactured stuff, which they call pretty, that people with a desire for beauty, and not too much taste cultivation, are quite likely to fall a prey. There can scarcely be too few pieces of ornament unless one is certain such pieces are beautiful in themselves, in harmony with the rest of the room and positively essential as a decorative note in the general scheme. With this key no one can go far astray.

There are herds of cows, droves of sheep, flocks of birds and regiments of men; but what shall we call the general use of flowers in compressed masses as they are commonly used with the idea that they are decorative? When the Japanese are able to see two flowers in one vase they have arrived at an extravagant use of these the most beautiful of nature's materials. Three are seen together very rarely.

How often one is appalled at the number of roses that it is possible to squeeze into one small jar. When it is not possible to get them all in, of course they can be thrown around upon the table. There also seems to be some lack of consideration as to where the crowded bowl shall finally find a resting-place. Flowers, for the sake of flowers in a room, are not decorative. They are decorative when they are of the kind in colour,

textural feeling and arrangement to harmonize with the place in which they are put; otherwise they are an unrelated element in the room.

Vases, which are as attractive in themselves as flowers are by themselves, are bad decorative adjuncts. There is no better way to show flowers than to use them in glass vases, where their beautiful stems are as delightful as the flowers themselves. Use few in one place; carefully select them as to kind; put them together well in the vase, and carefully place them with reference to their surroundings. This will give flowers a place in the scheme of interior decoration befitting their beauty and also respecting their nature quality.

Somebody will ask: "What about china for a dining-room?" All the way along it has seemed easier to cite bad things in china than in any other medium. By this time it must be clear that even china must be subject to the same laws of selection as other articles of furnishing and fitting.

When plain white china is used there can be no great discord. Plain white, however, does not always seem to be strong enough structurally for the scale of the table and other dining-room accessories. The structural effect may be greatly strengthened and the decorative idea appear when a plain gilt band is used, or something so nearly approaching this that strengthening of structure is the fundamental impression one receives from it.

Let us remember that china is no place to show pictures and that if pictures on dishes become more important than the dishes themselves, the same conditions must obtain as those in which the picture frame is more

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important than the picture, or the carving on the chair more appealing than its proportion or the comfort derived from sitting in it. If flowers must be used in any other way than that described, their decorative material should be structurally applied, carefully censored as to amount, and the motifs so conventionalized that they are unquestionably "nature adapted to the material in which it is expressed."

These simple details are submitted in a practical way that it may be clear to him who reads that the smallest detail is not unimportant in the final criticism of any room. This criticism must leave the mind convinced that the room is a unit: a unit, first, in its function idea perfectly expressed, and second, a unit in beauty of expression, no element of which can be taken from it, and to which no element can be added without destroying the fundamental idea.

Every house ever built was really a period house. The modern American house, like any other period house, must, first of all, be considered with reference to the way in which it is to be used. Man now looks not to the past to find something to copy or to graft on to some irregular background as an adequate expression of modern life, neither is he satisfied with mere housing or sheltering qualities. The house appears to the educated thinking man as a necessity and as an environment for mental comfort and natural growth.

Decorators and owners alike are coming to see that life in this country is expressed in scientific terms; that with the present viewpoint, as a people we cannot develop a consciousness capable of feeling the art quality as did the Italians during the Renaissance

period. Nor can we realize the imaginative possibilities in it as expressed in the Gothic period. They are seeing more surely the psychological relation between man and his works and the indisputable power of environment in determining one's future efficiency.

They are getting also nearer to the truth that principles are expressed in the language of colour and form as truly as they are in musical tones or through words or other symbols which express man's ideas. They are going to test the house, its furnishings, and its decorations, by the common-sense standard of functional modern fitness as well as from the intellectual and emotional standpoint of beauty, realizing the power of beauty in life development. This opens a new chapter in the field of interior decoration.

With these conditions in mind, every individual should approach his own problem. He will remember, then, that his house expresses himself, his intelligence, his ideas of art, his best conceptions of the æsthetic idea, and, so far as his means will allow, the qualities of materials which are best suited to fulfill this three-fold ideal. This viewpoint dignifies the personal idea and places it foremost in the consideration of the decoration of a modern house. In the next place he will consider carefully the individual function of every room and how he can most consistently express this functional idea.

The geography of a house, and all it exacts, one's present incumbrances, their limitations and their possibilities, together with the knowledge of periods and all that they imply, these are also considerations of importance to him who would realize the perfect ideal

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of the house, and each room in the house, as a personal creation and a form of self-expression.

All this must be given in the language of colour, form, line and texture, governed by the principles which are the very structure of this language. Letting one's feelings and imagination be governed by his intelligence, the house will be sincere, consistent and suited to the person associated with it and living in it. It can be in this way no better, and should be no worse, than the individual whose personal creation it is.

THE END



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